The Bedhampton War Memorial

Remembering those of this parish who gave their lives during World War One and World War Two

Charles Main's Commonwealth War Grave headstone in St Thomas' churchyard

11 November 2018
Centenary of the end of the First World War

£6

A meeting of subscribers inspected the designs for the memorial tablet and selected one of carved oak with a brass plate containing the names of the men of the parish who have fallen in the war, which it was decided should be erected on the south wall of the church. To date a sum of £31 7s. 3d. has been subscribed for this memorial. *Hampshire Telegraph*, 2 May1919

TO THE
GLORY OF GOD
AND
IN GRATEFUL MEMORY OF THOSE FROM THIS PARISH
WHO LAID DOWN THEIR LIVES IN THE GREAT WAR 1914-18
"GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN THIS"
AND OF THOSE
WHO LAID DOWN THEIR LIVES IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR
1939-1945

The Memorial tablet in St Thomas' church

On 23rd November 1919, at 3 p.m. the Memorial Tablet was unveiled at a most impressive ceremony by the South Hants M.P. Major-General Sir John Davidson, K.C.M.G., C.B., D.S.O., M.P. The service was organised by the Rector, Revd H. Pelham Stokes, and attended by the neighbouring clergy and a vast congregation, Lady Davidson being present. Special seats were allocated to the mourners.

A notable feature was the opportune arrival of the Hants Regimental Band after an absence from home of 20 years. The band joined the organ in the accompaniments to the stirring hymns, ending with the sounding of the Last Post.

Revd Stokes' booklet on Bedhampton

Sidney R. Balchin

Born: 1889
Address: 12 Western Road, Havant
Served: Royal Field Artillery, 5th (reserve) Brigade, 78th Battery
Rank: Driver
Service Number: 65967
Died: 1 July 1918, aged 29
Cemetery: St Thomas' churchyard
Family: Alexander and Emma Jane Balchin, originally from Dorking, Surrey. Sidney's father was a butcher. Prior to enlisting Sidney was a groom.

Sidney first joined up on 1 August 1911.

His service record has survived and we know that he was 5 feet 6 inches tall, fair faired with blue eyes. He had tattoos on both arms – on the right was the head of a girl with the name 'Phyllis' .

He spent his early service in India, where in 1913 he unfortunately contracted TB and was discharged to hospital on 29 August 1917.

On discharge Sydney was given the following reference:

A steady, sober man of exemplary character, reliable and trustworthy.

John Charles Battell

Born: December 1885, West End, Bedhampton
Address: Stockheath
Served: 3rd Hampshire Regiment,1903-09. 1st Battalion, Hampshire Regiment
Rank: Private
Service Number: 6830
Died: Sunday, 2 May 1915, aged 29
Memorial: Ypres, Menin Gate Memorial, Panel 35.
Family: Son of William Henry Battell of Harting and his wife Mary (née Clarke) of Havant. In 1881 William, described in the census as a dairyman, was living with his wife and seven children at 1 Brook Villas in Bedhampton. Ten years later William is a pork butcher and living with his family, now joined by John, at West End not far from their earlier home. At the time of the

1911 census John, aged 25, a general labourer, was living with his future in-laws Edward and Ruth Ware at 1 Clematis Cottage, Stockheath. He married Daisy Ware later that year. John enlisted in the Hampshire Regiment in Portsmouth where he and Daisy appear to have been living at the time. Two children were born, Daisy in 1912 and John in 1914. They would have had little, if any, memory of their father. John's widow remarried in 1918 to Harry Rook.

He previously served for six years in the 3rd Hampshire Regiment having enlisted on the 5 February at Portsmouth in 1903 aged 18 years 3 months. Formerly working as a labourer for a Mr Turner in Portsmouth.

Historical information

23 August 1914: Mobilised for war and landed at Havre and the Division engaged in various actions on the Western Front including:

1914: The Battle of Le Cateau, The Battle of the Marne, The Battle of the Aisne, The Battle of Messines. In December 1914 this Battalion took part in the Christmas Truce.

1915: The Second Battle of Ypres.

The ‘Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing’ is in Ypres, Belgium, dedicated to the 54,896 British and Commonwealth soldiers, except New Zealand, who were killed in the Ypres Salient of World War One before 16 August 1917 (with some exceptions) and whose graves are unknown. The memorial is located at the eastern exit of the town and marks the starting point for one of the main roads out of the town that led Allied soldiers to the front line. Designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield and built by the British Government, the Menin Gate Memorial was unveiled on 24 July 1927.

Alfred Clarke

Born: 1898 Warblington
Address: 3 Elmhurst Terrace, Lower Road, Bedhampton
Rank: Private
Service Number: 20108
Served: King’s Shropshire Light Infantry
Died: Wednesday, 30 October 1918
Cemetery: St Thomas’ churchyard
Family: 1911 census shows Alfred is the eldest of 6 children, his widowed mother Mrs E. Clarke (née Ward) is a laundress.

Alfred served from 28 November 1914 until 8 February 1917 when he was discharged as no longer physically fit for active service. He received the silver war badge.

Alfred’s Commonwealth War Grave in St Thomas’ churchyard

Llewellyn Cole

Born: 21 Staunton Road, Bedhampton, 17 February 1878
Address: Clarendon Road, Havant
Served: Portsmouth Battalion, Royal Naval Division, Royal Marine Light Infantry
Rank: Colour Serjeant
Service Number: P/O 8812
Died: 13 July 1915
Cemetery: Helles Memorial, Turkey (including Gallipoli)
Family: Father George Cole, Bricklayer, mother Sarah (née Thomas). Llewllyn was the second eldest of seven children. The husband of Mildred Cole (married 14 August 1913) of 75 Forton Road, Gosport, Hants.

Helles Memorial, Turkey (including Gallipoli)

Enlisted Gosport 17 November 1896. Promoted Corporal 1 October 1901, Queen's South Africa Medal with clasps 'Cape Colony' and 'South Africa 1901' (HMS *Beagle*); Lance Sergeant 22 February 1906; Sergeant 27 October 1907.

Re-engaged 15 November 1908; RN Long Service and Good Conduct Medal 15 November 1911; Portsmouth Battalion at Dunkirk 19 September to 12 October 1914; Colour Sergeant 1 January 1915; MEF 28 February 1915 to 13 July 1915. Discharged dead.

In civilian life he was employed as a fellmonger. 1914 Star issued to widow 5 August 1919.

Historical Information

During World War One, in addition to their usual stations aboard ship, Royal Marines were part of the Royal Naval Division which landed in Belgium in 1914 to help defend Antwerp and later took part in the amphibious landing at Gallipoli in 1915. They also served on the Western Front in the trenches.

Walter Henry Edmonds

Born: 1896, Portsea Island
Address: 6A Western Road, Bedhampton
Served: Gallipoli with the Hampshire Regiment and then the Balkans with the Wiltshire Regiment 'D' Coy 2nd Battalion
Rank: Private
Service Number: 29586
Died: 8 May 1918
Memorial: Tyne Cot
Family: Son of Walter and Rachel Edmonds (née Rackett)

Listed as wounded on the casualty list by the War Office, 24 November 1916.

Historical Information

2nd Battalion, 1918, The Battle of St Quentin, The actions at the Somme Crossings, The Battle of Rosieres, The Battle of Kemmel Ridge, The Second Battle of Kemmel Ridge, The Battle of the Scherpenberg, The capture of Neuve Eglise, The capture of Wulverghem, The Battle of Ypres

The Tyne Cot Memorial bears the names of almost 35,000 officers and men whose graves are not known. The memorial, designed by Sir Herbert Baker with sculpture by Joseph Armitage and F V Blundstone, was unveiled by Sir Gilbert Dyett on 20 June 1927. Walter can be found on Panel 119-120.

It is one of four memorials to the missing in Belgian Flanders which cover the area known as the Ypres Salient. Broadly speaking, the Salient stretched from Langemarck in the north to the northern edge in Ploegsteert Wood in the south, but it varied in area and shape throughout the war.

The Tyne Cot Memorial

Historical Information

The battles of the Ypres Salient claimed many lives on both sides and it quickly became clear that the commemoration of members of the Commonwealth forces with no known grave would have to be divided between several different sites. Those United Kingdom and New Zealand servicemen who died after 16 August 1917 are named on the memorial at Tyne Cot, a site which marks the furthest point reached by Commonwealth forces in Belgium until nearly the end of the war. Other New Zealand casualties are commemorated on memorials at Buttes New British Cemetery and Messines Ridge British Cemetery.

The Salient was formed during the First Battle of Ypres in October and November 1914, when a small British Expeditionary Force succeeded in securing the town before the onset of winter, pushing the German forces back to the Passchendaele Ridge. The Second Battle of Ypres began in April 1915 when the Germans released poison gas into the Allied lines north of Ypres.

This was the first time gas had been used by either side and the violence of the attack forced an Allied withdrawal and a shortening of the line of defence.

There was little more significant activity on this front until 1917, when in the Third Battle of Ypres an offensive was mounted by Commonwealth forces to divert German attention from a weakened French front further south. The initial attempt in June to dislodge the Germans from the Messines Ridge was a complete success, but the main assault north-eastward, which began at the end of July, quickly became a dogged struggle against determined opposition and the rapidly deteriorating weather. The campaign finally came to a close in November with the capture of Passchendaele.

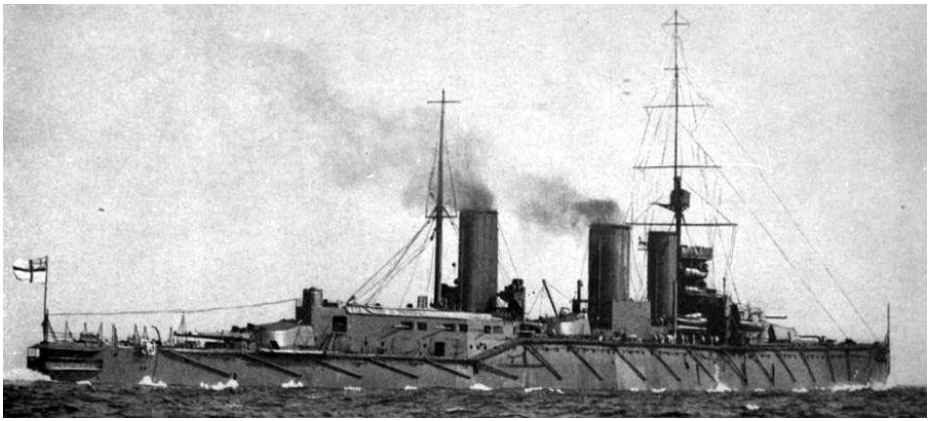
Joseph Fitzwilliam (incorrectly named Fitzwilliams on the memorial)

Born: 12 May 1878, Ratch Hill, Kintore in Aberdeenshire.
Address: 23 Staunton Road, Bedhampton
Served: Royal Marine Artillery, HMS *Queen Mary*
Rank: Gunner
Service Number: 8660
Died: 31 May 1916, aged 38. Battle of Jutland
Memorial: Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 30. Kintore war memorial, Aberdeenshire.
Family: Husband of Rose E Fitzwilliam, 23 Staunton Road, Bedhampton. Joseph's father, John was a stone mason originally from Ireland. Joseph was the second to youngest of ten children born to John and Helen Fitzwilliam. Before the war on the 1901 census, he is already a Gunner in the RMA at Portsmouth having enlisted in the Royal Marines on 16 November 1900. His description is typically Irish, being five feet eleven, with black hair, a dark complexion and blue eyes, his character and ability rated very good. He was discharged on the 5 January 1912, having served his twelve years. Joseph married Rose Ellen Wyatt, from 18, Staunton Road, on April 8th 1912 at St Thomas in Bedhampton. On his marriage certificate it states Joseph's occupation as a constable, and his residence, Newington, London. They set up home in Staunton Road and had two children, George Eric, born 1913 and Henry John, born 1914. Joseph was placed on the Royal Fleet Reserve following his service in the navy. He was re-mobilised on the 2 August 1914, assigned to HMS *Queen Mary*.

Historical information

The Battle of Jutland

The battle of Jutland took place between the British and German Fleets commencing on the 31 of May 1916, fought over two days in the North Sea off the coast of Denmark. The German High Seas Fleet hoped to weaken the Royal Navy by ambushing them .It was the only major naval battle of World War One and was to become the largest sea battle in naval history in terms of battleships. It involved 250 ships and 100,000 men. 6,097 British men were killed, 510 wounded. The British losses were very sudden, the cause, weak defensive armour which allowed the German shells to penetrate the British ships magazine holds, resulting in massive explosions. HMS *Queen Mary* and HMS *Indefatigable* were both lost in this way on the first day. The total British losses were three Battlecruisers, three Armoured Cruisers and eight Destroyers. Despite these losses the British reported twenty four battleships ready for action the next day. Although the British casualties were far greater than those of the German Fleet the damage was such that the German Fleet did not put to sea again during the war.



H M S *Queen Mary*

HMS ***Queen Mary*** was the last battlecruiser built by the Royal Navy before World War I. The sole member of her class, *Queen Mary* shared many features with the *Lion*-class battlecruisers, including her eight 13.5-inch (343 mm) guns. She was completed in 1913 and participated in the Battle of Heligoland Bight as part of the Grand Fleet in 1914. Like most of the modern British battlecruisers, she never left the North Sea during the war. As part of

the 1st Battlecruiser Squadron, she attempted to intercept a German force that bombarded the North Sea coast of England in December 1914, but was unsuccessful. She was refitting in early 1915 and missed the Battle of Dogger Bank in January, but participated in the largest fleet action of the war, the Battle of Jutland in mid-1916. She was hit twice by the German battlecruiser *Derfflinger* during the early part of the battle and her magazines exploded shortly afterwards, sinking the ship.

Her wreck was discovered in 1991 and rests in pieces, some of which are upside down, on the floor of the North Sea. *Queen Mary* is designated as a protected place under the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986 as it is the grave of 1,266 officers and men.

Leonard Claude Hoar

Born: 30 January 1893 East Leigh Farm, Havant.
Address: When enlisted Wade Court Farm Warblington, then Belmont Farm, Bedhampton.
Served: 14th (1st Portsmouth) Battalion, Hampshire Regiment
Rank: Private
Service Number: 15737
Died: 3 September 1916
Memorial: Thiepval, Somme, France. Pier and Face 7C and 7B
Family: Father Harry Stephen Hoar, Farmer and Cattle Dealer, who was married in 1877 to Mary Amelia (née Coombs). They had nine children. Leonard was their fifth child.

On 5 August 1912 Leonard married Eva Bointon from Potash Terrace, Havant, at St Faith's church. The marriage certificate gives his occupation as cowman, and his address, Wade Court Farm. On the day he was killed his son, also Leonard Claude was being christened at St Thomas' church. His parents had by this time moved to Belmont Farm, Bedhampton.

Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France. Opened on 31 July 1932 by the Prince of Wales, the Thiepval memorial is the largest British war memorial in the world. The memorial contains the names of 73,357 British and South African men who have no known grave and who fell on the Somme between July 1916 and 20 March 1918. It records the names of six Havant men.

Historical Information

On 1 July 1916, supported by a French attack to the south, thirteen divisions of Commonwealth forces launched an offensive on a line from north of Gommecourt to Maricourt. Despite a preliminary bombardment lasting seven days, the German defences were barely touched and the attack met unexpectedly fierce resistance. Losses were catastrophic and with only minimal advances on the southern flank, the initial attack was a failure. In the following weeks, huge resources of manpower and equipment were deployed in an attempt to exploit the modest successes of the first day. However, the German Army was tenacious and repeated attacks and counter attacks meant a major battle for every village, copse and farmhouse gained. At the end of September Thiepval was finally captured. The village had been an original objective of 1 July. Attacks north and east continued throughout October and into November in increasingly difficult weather conditions. The Battle of the Somme finally ended on 18 November with the onset of winter.

Charles George Holcombe

Born: 1890, Bedhampton
Address: Forty Acres
Served: 14th (1st Portsmouth) Battalion, Hampshire Regiment
Rank: Private
Service Number: 8029
Died: 3 September 1916
Cemetery: Hamel Military Cemetery, Beaumont-Hamel
Family: Parents Harry and Elizabeth Holcombe, Bedhampton. Harry was a stockman. Charles was the eldest of five children.

May 1916: Mobilised for war and landed in France and the Division engaged in various actions on the Western Front including in 1916 the Battle of Flers-Courcelette and the Battle of the Transloy Ridges.

Listed as 'Wounded' on the Casualty List issued by the War Office from 30 May 1915. This man was entitled to wear a 'Wound Stripe' as authorised under Army Order 204 of 6 July 1916.

Hamel Military Cemetery, Beaumont-Hamel

Alfred Oliver Inglett

Born: In the last quarter of 1879 in St Olave, Bermondsey,
Rank: Lance Corporal
Service Number: 7369
Served: A Company, 1st Battalion, Lincolnshire Regiment
Died: 20 September 1916, aged 34
Memorial: Thiepval Memorial
Family: On the 1911 census Oliver is listed as being overseas military, serving in Aden. He married his wife Rosina Alice Smith in Wandsworth, London during the first quarter of 1914. At the time of Oliver's death they lived in North Street, Bedhampton. When Oliver was killed in1916 Rosina was pregnant with their first child. She gave birth to a son in February 1917 and named him Alfred after his father. She re-married in1919 at Portsmouth to Ernest Roberts of 21 Lower Derby Road, Stamshaw, Portsmouth

13 October 1914: Oliver is listed as wounded on the War Office Casualty List. Also on 15 March 1915, again listed as wounded.

4 August 1914: Stationed at Portsmouth as part of the 9th brigade of the 3rd Division. 14 November 1915: Transferred to the 62nd Brigade of the 21st Division and again engaged in various actions on the Western Front.

Wilfred Jacks

Born: June 1898, 4 Staunton Road, Havant
Served: 8th Battalion, The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers
Rank: Private
Service Number: 41762
Died: 16th August 1917, aged 19
Memorial: Tyne Cot, panel 70-72
Family, youngest son of Edward, who was employed as a stoker at Portsmouth Water Company, and Emma. They were married in 1893.

Historical Information

7th and 8th (Service) Battalion – Battles Of Ypres – Battle Of Langemarck – 16 August 1917. Wilfred died on the first day.

Location: Borry Farm. Indecisive. The second major Allied attack of the Third Battle of Ypres.

The attack succeeded in the north, from Langemarck to Drie Grachten (Three Canals) but early advances in the south, on the Gheluvelt Plateau, were forced back by powerful German counter-attacks. The course of the battle was hampered by the atrocious weather and ground conditions which affected the British attack through low-lying areas that had been heavily bombed.

To the right of the Fifth Army front, in XIX Corps, 16th (Irish) Division and 36th Division were tasked with assaulting the Anzac and Zonnebeke Ridges, the slopes of the Hanebeek and Steenbeek streams (although more like rivers with the amount of rain the area had experienced) and a series of fortified enemy positions such as Borry Farm, Gallipoli Farm, Iberian Farm and Somme Farm. Both divisions had been in continuous action for some time (more than two weeks) without relief and were seriously under strength due to casualties sustained in recent actions; as soon as the British artillery barrage started so the German machine gun crews opened fire from their reinforced concrete bunkers.

To the attacking infantrymen it seemed as if every enemy machine gun was trained on the breaks in the barbed wire entanglements. German resistance was so strong that very few British troops reached their objectives; 48th Brigade coming under fire from the rear as they advanced.

To the left, 49th Brigade encountered fierce fire from the strong point of Borry Farm, although a handful of men reached to within 400 yards of the crest of Hill 37. The British attack along the Gheluvelt Plateau was gradually petering out in the face of determined resistance and dreadful weather and ground conditions.

From 16th to 18th August, 16th (Irish) Division lost almost 2,200 casualties either killed, wounded or posted missing.

Robert James

Born: 1898
Address: 19 Staunton Road, Bedhampton
Served: 16th (2nd Portsmouth) Battalion, Hampshire Regiment
Rank: Private
Service Number: 19613
Died: 15 September 1916, aged 18
Memorial: Thiepval, face 7C and 7B
Family: Son of Thomas and Lucy James, Robert was the second to youngest of six children. Thomas was a stoker at the Portsmouth Water Company.

May 1916: Mobilised for war and landed in France and the Division engaged in various actions on the Western Front including during 1916 The Battle of Flers-Courcelette, The Battle of the Transloy Ridges.

16 June 1916: Robert was sent to hospital, his ailment recorded as 'inflamation of connective tissue, face'. He spent five days in hospital before being returned to duty.

George Edward Leach

Born: 1891, Bedhampton
Address: Stockheath, Bedhampton
Served: 115th Heavy Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery,
Rank: Bombardier
Service Number: 35578
Served: France and Flanders
Died: 25 October 1915 on the Somme
Cemetery: Lesboeufs, grave Ref: X11 L 10
Family: One of eight children born to Edward and Ellen Leach. Edward was a worker on one of the farms that later became the Leigh Park Estate.

Historical Information

Lesboeufs was attacked by the Guards Division on 15 September 1916 and captured by them on the 25th. It was lost on 24 March 1918 during the great German offensive, after a stubborn resistance by part of the 63rd Battalion

Machine Gun Corps, and recaptured on 29 August by the 10th Battalion South Wales Borderers.

The Guards' Cemetery at Lesboeufs

At the time of the Armistice, the cemetery consisted of only 40 graves (now Plot I), mainly those of officers and men of the 2nd Grenadier Guards who died on 25 September 1916, but it was very greatly increased when graves were brought in from the battlefields and small cemeteries round Lesboeufs.

There are now 3,136 casualties of the First World War buried or commemorated in this cemetery. 1,643 of the burials are unidentified but there are special memorials to 83 soldiers known or believed to be buried among them. Other special memorials record the names of five casualties buried in Ginchy A.D.S. Cemetery, whose graves were destroyed by shell fire, and three officers of the 2nd Battalion Coldstream Guards, killed in action on 26 September 1916 and known to have been buried together by the roadside near Lesboefs, whose grave could not later be located.

The more considerable burial grounds concentrated into this cemetery were the following:

Flers Dressing Station Cemetery, Ginchy, between Delville Wood and Flers, containing the graves of 33 soldiers from Australia and eight from the United Kingdom who fell in September 1916 to March 1917.

Flers Road cemetery, Flers, on the Flers-Longueval road, containing the graves of 17 soldiers from the United Kingdom, three from New Zealand and one from Australia, who fell in October, 1916.

Arthur Lewis

Born: 1884, Westbourne, West Sussex
Address: Middle Park Farm, Bedhampton
Served: 15th (Service) Battalion, Hampshire Regiment
Rank: Private
Service Number: 19213
Died: 15 September 1916
Cemetery: Bulls Road Cemetery, Fleurs
Family: Parents, Arthur and Louisa Lewis. The 1901 census shows Louisa described as widowed. Young Arthur is described as a Labourer. He was one of only two children, both boys, his brother, John, is is listed below. He was a bachelor.

9 November 1916: War Office issued a Casualty list which listed Arthur as wounded.

24 November 1916: War Office issued a Casualty List now reported as previously wounded and now missing.

This is in contrast to the date of death recorded on The War Graves Commission. Perhaps not so surprising with the confusion of battle and the high mortality rate.

Historical information

May 1916: Mobilised for war and landed in France and the Division engaged in various actions on the Western Front including during 1916 The Battle of Flers-Courcelette and The Battle of the Transloy Ridges.

John Melton Lewis

Born: 1886, Westbourne, West Sussex
Address: Middle Park Farm, Bedhampton
Served: 1st Battalion, Hampshire Regiment
Rank: Lance Corporal
Service Number: 24951
Died: Thursday, 4 October 1917
Cemetery: Poelcapelle British cemetery F. 7.
Family: Son of Arthur (deceased) and Louisa Lewis. Occupation described on the 1911 census as being a Wood Carman. Brother to Arthur Lewis above.

Poelcapelle British cemetery, Belgium

Historical information

1917: The First and Third Battles of the Scarpe, The Battle of Polygon Wood, The Battle of Broodseinde, The Battle of Poelcapelle, The First Battle of Passchendaele.

Robert Lloyd Davies

Born: Circa 1888
Served: 129th Field Company, Royal Engineers
Rank: Lieutenant
Died**:** Thursday, 12 April 1917, aged 29
Cemetery: Aix-Noulette Communal Cemetery Extension, E. 23.
Family: Son of a surgeon Mr John Morgan Lloyd Davies of 'Glanafon' Haverford, West Pembrokeshire. On the 28 August 1915 at St Thomas's in Bedhampton Robert married Blanche Catherine Forman White, daughter of Gwynten Forman White, gentleman of Bedhampton. When they married Blanche was quartered at Blackdown Camp, Farnborough. Unfortunately Blanche also died in 1916 aged just 26; she was buried on the 2 December in the churchyard of St Thomas'. This would explain Robert's parents being cited as next of kin. Robert is also commemorated in his home town.

Aix-Noulette Communal Cemetery Extension

Historical information

Royal Engineer tunnelling companies, nicknamed 'the Moles', were specialist units of the Corps of Royal Engineers within the British Army, formed to dig attacking tunnels under enemy lines during the First World War. They designed and built the frontline fortifications, creating cover for the infantry and positions for the artillery.

In 1915, in response to German mining of British trenches under the then static siege conditions of World War One, the corps formed its own tunnelling

companies. Manned by experienced coal miners from across the country, they operated with great success until 1917, when after the fixed positions broke they built deep dugouts such as the 'Vampire dugout' to protect troops from heavy shelling.

Charles Main

Born: 17 May 1878
Address: Longmead, Bedhampton
Served : HMS *Shakespeare*
Rank: Engineer Commander
Died: 31 May 1918 when the ship hit a mine
Cemetery: St Thomas' churchyard
Family: Charles Main was born in Portsmouth on the 17 May 1878; one of the eight children of Reuben and Susan Main, and their youngest son. His father was a Harbour Pilot at Portsmouth. He enrolled in the Royal Navy on 23 June 1898.

At the age of 22 Charles was Assistant Engineer on HMS *Majestic*.

On 9 January 1907 he was appointed to HMS *King Edward VII* as Engineer Lieutenant.

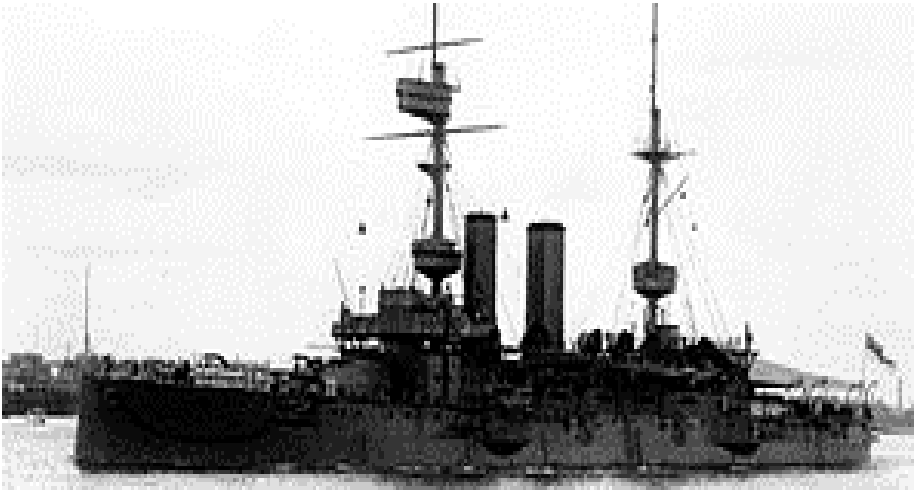
He was later appointed as Engineer Commander on HMS *Shakespeare*. She served as part of Channel Squadron based in Harwich on the East Coast. At sea in late May 1918 she struck a mine and was seriously damaged. The only fatality was Charles.

HMS *Shakespeare* was a Thorneycroft type Destroyer Leader launched in 1917, she was scrapped in 1936.

Edward Charles Matthews

Born: 4 August 1875
Address: Nutbourne, West Sussex
Served: Joined the Royal Navy in 1894, aged 19
Service Number: No: 278364
Rank: Petty Officer, Chief Stoker, HMS *Bulwark,*
Died: As a result of an explosion on board ship on the 26 November 1914, aged 39
Memorial: Portsmouth Naval Memorial
Family: Married Alice Maud Elliot, of Mill Pond Villa, West Ashling, Chichester, Sussex, in the 2nd quarter of the year 1913, at Westbourne, West Sussex.

Historical information



A powerful explosion ripped *Bulwark* apart at 7.50a.m. on 26 November 1914 while the ship was berthed at No. 17 buoy, 4.6 miles from Sheerness in the Medway Estuary. Of the 750 men on board only 14 sailors survived two of whom later died of their injuries.

Witnesses reported a huge pillar of black cloud from whence came a column of flames; this was followed by a thunderous roar. Then a series of lesser detonations and finally one vast explosion. The explosion is thought to have been caused by cordite being stored next to the boiler room.

Edward Charles was a brother to Mattie Matthews.

His mother, having lost two sons in this war, together with her eldest daughter Elizabeth also losing her partner Robert Trickett.

Mrs Susan Matthews mother of these two men married her husband Mattie in 1863, aged 25 and 20 respectively. They had a total of 19 children, but by 1911 only 11 survived. By the end of the war only nine had survived. They were married for over 40 years.

Ernest George Matthews

Born: 1879-81, Westbourne, West Sussex
Rank; Stoker 1st class, HMS *Britannia*
Service Number: 290595
Died: 9 November 1918
Memorial: Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 30
Family: Called George at home

The Portsmouth Naval Memorial on Southsea Common commemorates almost 10,000 sailors of World War One who have no grave except the sea. The inscription reads:

> *In honour of the Navy and to the abiding memory of these ranks and ratings of this port who laid down their lives in the defence of the Empire and have no other grave than the sea.*

Historical information

On 9 November 1918, just two days before the end of the war, HMS *Britannia* was torpedoed by a German submarine off Cape Trafalgar and sank with the loss of 50 men. She was the last Royal Navy ship to be sunk in the war.

Frederick Mengham

Born: 1887
Address: 89 North Street, Bedhampton
Regiment: 312th Road Construction Company, Royal Engineers
Rank: Pioneer
Service Number: 226383
Served: France and Flanders
Died: 28 October 1917
Cemetery: Ypres Reservoir cemetery
Family: Thomas and Maria Mengham**,** brothers Richard, George, James and Arthur; sisters, Annie and Harriet. Wife, Sarah Jane Mengham, formerly from Gosport, they had been married less than a year at this time (1911). Prior to going in the services Frederick is described as a brickyard labourer on the 1911 census. This is probably why they put him in the Royal Engineers.

Ypres Reservoir cemetery

Historical information

From October 1916 the Royal Engineers had been working underground, constructing tunnels for the troops in preparation for the Battle of Arras in 1917. Beneath Arras itself there is a vast network of caverns called the 'boves', consisting of underground quarries and sewage tunnels. The engineers came up with a plan to add new tunnels to this network so that troops could arrive at the battlefield in secrecy and in safety. The size of the excavation was immense. In one sector alone four Tunnel Companies of 500 men each worked around the clock in 18-hour shifts for two months.

Winter Parham

Born: 1891, Havant
Service: Army
Rank: Lance Corporal
Service Number: 22031
Served: Royal Berkshire Regiment
Died: 28 November 1918, aged 28
Cemetery: Havant Cemetery, 1667
Family: One of five surviving sons of George and Ellen Parham from Nile Street in Emsworth. Both father and sons' occupations were listed as fishermen in the 1911 census, except the youngest who was still at school. Winter married Kate Winifred French on the 26 December 1912 at St Faith's Church, Havant. On 8 July 1914 they had a son named George Winter

Parham. In the baptism record Winter was then described as a ‘leather dresser’ living in West Street Havant.

When Winter was injured on 24 march 1918 his wife lived in the bungalow adjoining the railway gates at Bedhampton. Initially, he was enlisted into the Hampshire Regiment, 17th Battalion, service No 380633, He was then transferred to the Royal Berkshire Regiment .

Injured on 23 March 1918. Gunshot wound VIII.1. (Entry filled out with the Army Wound Classification System of Roman Numerals). VIII.1, gunshot wound of the upper extremities. Simple flesh contusion or wound. Transferred to sick convoy 24 March 1918.

Winter’s war grave in Havant cemetery

Harry Joseph Poate

Born: circa 1875, Littlehampton
Address: Five doors down from the Belmont Tavern, Bedhampton
Served: 9th Field Bakery, Royal Army Service Corps
Rank: Corporal
Service Number: S4/157368
Died: 26 November 1918, aged 43 at Dieppe
Cemetery: Janval Naval Cemetery, Dieppe
Family: Son of Harry and Mary Ann Poate of Bedhampton and husband of Amy Poate of Bedhampton.

In the 1901 census Harry is single and described as a coachman. He married Amy Chappel from Croydon in 1902.

Janval Naval Cemetery, Dieppe

Historical information

The role of the Royal Army service Corps was to supply and transport. Supply embraces the provision of food, petrol and lubricants, fuel and light, hospital supplies and disinfectants.

Cyril George Privett

Born: 4 April 1895, Forton, Gosport.
Served: 1st Battalion,
Devonshire Regiment
Rank: Private
Service Number: 7810
Died: Tuesday, 30 January 1917
Cemetery: Gorre British and Indian cemetery, III. E. 23.
Family: Albert and Amelia (née Bull) Privett. Albert was serving in the Royal Marine Light Infantry when Cyril was born. Amelia was then widowed and on 17 April 1906 she re-married to Andrew Thompson. In the 1911 census Cyril is living with his grandparents in North Street, Bedhampton. His mother and Andrew Thompson are living in Dartmouth, Devon.

Gorre British and Indian cemetery

Historical information

1917: The Battles of Vimy, Polygon Wood, Broodseinde, Poelcapelle, the attack on La Coulotte, the third battle of the Scarpe and the Second Battle of Passchendaele.

William Thomas Smith

Born: 26 August 1893, Lion Terrace, Bedhampton
Address: 30 East Durrants, North Havant (now Rowlands Castle)
Served: Formerly 898 Hampshire Regiment, Royal Warwickshire Regiment 2/6th
Rank: Company Sergeant Major
Service Number: 241987
Died: 2 November 1918, aged 25.
Cemetery: 25 Crucifix Cemetery, Vendegies-sur-Ecaillon
Family: Thomas was the 3rd of 6 children born to John and Alice Smith in Lion Terrace in Bedhampton. His father, John was a bricklayer's labourer. Before the war William was employed as a gardener.

Lion Terrace, Main Road

The origin of the name is not known, but the small roundel beneath the eaves above the central doorway is said to have contained the figure of a lion. Lion Terrace, which stood immediately to the east of North Street has been demolished and its place taken by a block of two-storey flats.

Lion Terrace comprised five cottages, each containing four rooms, presumably 'two-up-and-two-down'. How the cottages were arranged and entered from the three doorways seen in the photograph is uncertain, and it is puzzling that there are three chimney stacks each having three chimney pots.

Three of the cottages were occupied by labourers: one described in the 1911 census as a general labourer, another as a railway labourer and the third as a builder's labourer. The remaining heads of households were female: an 'OAP' and a charwoman. John Smith, the builder's labourer, had a family of eight including William – later to be killed in the First World War – so his cottage would have been overcrowded. The other cottages in the terrace had between two and six occupants.

Historical information

2/5th and 2/6th Battalion Territorial Force
21 May 1916: Mobilised for war and landed France where the formation became the 143rd Brigade of the 48th Division and engaged in various actions on the Western Front including during 1916 the attack at Fromelles. During 1917: The operations on the Ancre, The German Retreat to the

Hindenburg Line; the Battle of Langemarck, and The German counter attacks.
During 1918: The Battle of St Quentin, The Actions at the Somme Crossings, The Battle of Estaires, the Battle of Hasbrouck, the Battle of Bethune, the Battle of the Selle, the Battle of Valenciennes.
Cemetery: Crucifix Cemetery, Vendegies-Sur-Ecaillonb. 6. Nord, France.

Source: Soldiers Died in the Great War database © Naval and Military Press Ltd 2010 and Find My Past.

Crucifix Cemetery, Vendegies-sur-Ecaillon. French graves in the front

Frank Edward Stapley (incorrectly named Stapeley on the memorial)

Born: Circa 1891
Served: 14th (1st Portsmouth) Battalion, Hampshire Regiment
Rank: Lance Corporal
Service Number: 22933
Died: 26 September 1917, aged 26
Memorial: Tyne Cot
Family: Frank was the seventh and youngest child of George and Sarah Stapley. In 1911 the family lived at North Street, Bedhampton and Frank's

father worked as a general labourer at the waterworks. Sarah died between the 1901 and 1911 census, when Frank enlisted his father was a widower. The census describes Frank, 19 at the time, as a 'hire carter working from barges', probably in Langstone Harbour. Frank's grandmother was a Mengham and his second cousin, who also lived in North Street, died in action at Ypres on 28th October 1917, just one month after Frank was killed. Frank was unmarried. He probably died during the Battle of Polygon Wood and he is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial at Zonnebeke, close to where he fell.

5 September 1917: Frank was listed on War Office casualty list 5356 as wounded. It is not recorded as to whether Frank eventually died of this wound or whether he returned to the front and was killed.

North Street, Bedhampton, as it would have been when the Stapley family lived there.

North Street, Bedhampton

The street was unmade and the terraced cottages openend directly on to it. North Street has always been a cul-de-sac, but the photograph shows a footpath through the field beyond.

The inhabitants of North Street on the eve of the First World War comprised a tight-knit community and the 1911 census shows that, of the fourteen

households enumerated, no fewer than four were Menghams. Subsequent research has shown that another of the families, the Stapleys, were also related to the Menghams.

As might be expected, North Street was a working-class community. In 1911 ten out of the fourteen heads of households were classed as labourers, working for a variety of employers. Three worked for bricklayers, one for the water company, two for 'public works' and so on. Thomas Mengham was alone in being recorded as a farm labourer. Widows, like Sarah Pearce, might take in washing to support themselves and their families. Charles Privett, whose children had left home, was in receipt of a naval pension. Frederick Little worked as a coal carter, perhaps for the family business which had timber, coal and shingle barges operating from its wharf at Langstone.

The cottages in North Street varied between three and five rooms, not including a scullery but probably including a parlour, and most were cramped. John Mengham's household, for example, comprised seven adults and children, but the house contained only four rooms. Next door, Frederick Mengham and Sarah, his wife of less than a year, enjoyed four rooms. It is not unlikely that some of his neighbour's children would have occupied their spare bedrooms until their own children were born. Further along the street, William and Eliza Weaver, married for thirty-two years, occupied a five-roomed house. Of their six children three had moved away and three had died.

Historical information

1917: The Battles of Pilkem Ridge, Langemarck, Menin Road Ridge and Polygon Wood, the Second Battle of Passchendaele.

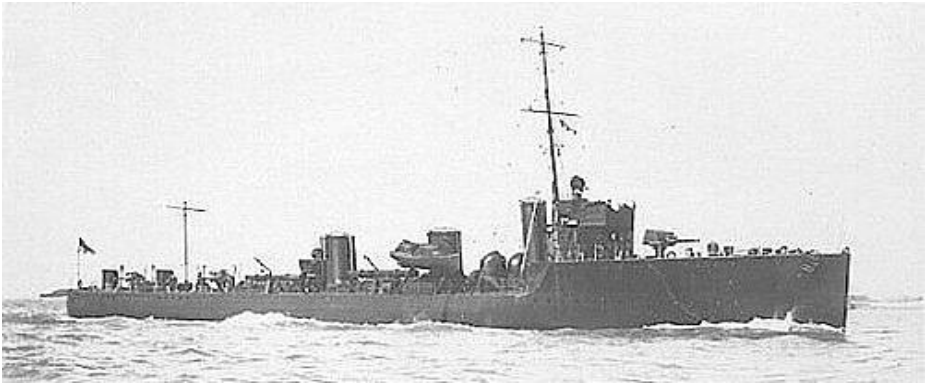
Robert Trickett

Born near Bolton, Lancashire. In the 1891 Census he is shown living with his widowed mother in Turton who was aged 39, his sister Ada, aged 6 and Robert who was then then aged 14.
Served: HMS *Lynx*
Rank: Stoker 1st Class
Service No. 291066
Died: 9 August 1915, aged 36
Memorial: Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 8

Family: Robert married Annie Swindells in the 1st quarter 1897, aged 19. Unfortunately she is shown as having died approximately a year later.

1911 the census recorded him as serving in the Mediterranean.

Robert's unofficial wife is named as Elizabeth L Matthews, 8 Summerstown, Havant. Elizabeth was born in 1876. She had previously lived at Lower Road, Bedhampton, where her mother lived. Two of her brothers also served in the Royal Navy and were both killed.



HMS *Lynx*

Historical information

The Destroyer, *Lynx* was launched Thursday, 20 March 1913 at the London & Glasgow Engineering & Iron Shipbuilding Company and completed 1913. Her dimensions were a length of 266 feet, and a tonnage of 950 tons. She struck a mine in the Moray of Firth on 9 August 1915 and sank. The crew totalled 96, of which 70 died and 4 officers and 22 ratings survived.

William Whitbread

Born: 2nd quarter 1893, registered at Havant
Address: Dunsbury Hill Farm
Served: 4th Battalion, Grenadier Guards
Rank: Private
Service Number: 29666
Died: Died 12 April 1918
Memorial: Ploegsteert Memorial, Hainaut, Belgium
Family: William was the youngest of seven children born to George and Lucy Whitbread (née Luckey) of Dunsbury Hill Farm. William's father was a dairy farmer and prior to the war William worked on the farm with his father and siblings.

28 February1918: William was on the War Office Casualty list 5504 as wounded.

Ploegsteert Memorial, Hainaut, Belgium

Historical information

19 August 1915: Mobilised for war and landed in France to join the 4th Guards Brigade of the 31st Division.
1918: Ended of the war in France, Criel Plage South West of Le Tréport.

Edward Wilder

Born: 1887
Address: Formerly of Stansted House
Service: Royal Navy Reserve
Rank: Sub Lieutenant
Served: HM Yacht *Oriana* was a hired yacht built 1896. Auxiliary small craft. Head of patrol boats at Liverpool.
Died: Friday, 23 April 1915 as a result of contracting pneumonia whilst on active service.
Cemetery: St Thomas' Churchyard
Family: Son of the late George (died 1896) and Mary O'Callaghan Wilder. Brother of Frank Wilder. Grandson of Admiral O'Callaghan of The Towers, Bedhampton.
When her husband died, their eldest son George inherited the Stansted Estate, he sold it in 1902 and Mary Wilder lived with her father in The Towers, Bedhampton.

Edward was the second to youngest of six children; he was born in Westminster, London. He married Dorothy Lilyan Mocatta on 18 September 1912 at Paddington in London, although when Edward died there is no mention of a wife. He had an elaborate naval funeral; his remains were met by a funeral party of 72 men from the Royal Naval Barracks, Portsmouth. Conveyed to the church of St Thomas by a gun carriage draped with a Union Jack upon which his cap and sword rested. Among the floral tributes was one from Mr and Mrs J. E. A. Mocatta.

Frank Wilder

Born: Circa 1881 at Westminster, London
Service: Royal Horse Artillery, Q Battery
Rank: Second Lieutenant
Died: 31 March 1916, aged 35
Cemetery: Faubough D'Amiens, Arras, France. A 8
Family: Son of the late (died 1896) George and Mary O'Callaghan Wilder, Grandson of Admiral O'Callaghan of The Towers, Bedhampton. Frank was Edward's older brother by six years.

He married his wife, Meta Geraldine (née Cammell) of 28 Sumner Place, Kensington, London, in 1912 at Kensington, London. Her family had previously lived at Ditcham Park.

Historical information

The Royal Horse Artillery (RHA) is a regiment in the British Army. 'A' and 'B' Troops of the Royal Horse Artillery were raised in January 1793 at Goodwood, Sussex by the 3rd Duke of Richmond, who was Master-General of Ordnance, to provide fire support for the cavalry. They were joined by two more troops in November 1793. All RHA personnel were mounted – a departure from the prevailing British practice under which the guns were served and drawn by different groups, which restricted tactical mobility.

Faubough D'Amiens, Arras, France

When You Go Home,
Tell Them of Us and Say,
For Their Tomorrow,
We Gave Our Today.

Circa World War One, John Maxwell Edmonds

Bedhampton at war, as reported in the newspapers

On the 15 October 1914 the *West Sussex Gazette* reported Bedhampton had no less than 73 men on active service.

Bedhampton

A special service was held in the church for men in the Parish church on Sunday afternoon, the preacher being the Rector, the Rev. H. P. Stokes, who took as his subject 'Training for war'.

Hampshire Telegraph. 16 October 1914

For Use of Troops

The schoolroom attached to the gospel hall at Bedhampton has been opened every evening from Monday for the convenience of soldiers. Refreshments, games, magazines, books and writing material are being provided.

Hampshire Telegraph, 30 October 1914

BEDHAMPTON

Soldiers and Temperance

The fourth and final meeting of a series of a series of gatherings held by The Havant Branch of the British Women's Temperance Association, on behalf of soldiers and others, was held in Bedhampton School yesterday week. The Rector (the Rev. H. P. Stokes) presided, and addresses were given by Mrs Purchase (County President of the Association) and Colonel Fawkes, J. P. Several of those present signed the pledge at the close of the meeting, and a few new members were also obtained.

Hampshire Telegraph 27 November 1914

A Motto for the Year

The intercession services for the war at the Bedhampton Parish Church were well attended, and the offertories amounting to £4 8s., were equally divided between The British Red Cross Society and the Belgian Relief Fund. A children's service was held in the afternoon, and at the evening service the Rector (the Rev. H. Pelham Stokes) preached from the motto verse for this year: *The Eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.*

Hampshire Telegraph, 8 January 1915

Appeals from the pulpit have unquestionably influenced many young men who have joined the colours during the last few months. In the current parish magazine, the Rector of Bedhampton (Rev.H. Pelham Stokes) points out that the parish has come out splendidly as regards the numbers who have left on active service, and he asks: *Are there any left who ought to go?* He adds: *You cannot conquer the Germans by abusing them You must fight them.* This most terrible war is a dark cloud, but the nation is being elevated and purified by the severity of the trial….One mother whose loved boy was reported as killed, writes: *Yes it is hard, but the sorrow of so many other mothers ought to keep me from complaining*. *We shall conquer* concludes the Rector, *though it will cost us dear*.

Hampshire Telegraph, 8 January 1915

A BEDHAMPTON MAN

Soldier's Interesting War letter

On Tuesday morning Mr and Mrs J. T. Coldman, of Bedhampton received an interesting letter from Lance Corporal T. D. Messen of the Second Battalion Worcester Regiment, who is a member of a family well known in the village. Writing under date 22 January, Lance Corporal Messen acknowledges with thanks the receipt of a present from Mr and Mrs Coldman and continues:

The number of gifts we have had out here has been enormous, and not one soldier can say he has wanted for anything. It was a bit hard at times during our retirement from Mons, as sometimes we did not get our rations until late at night. But since we have started the Germans on the run, I can assure you we get plenty of food, and if those Huns had as good I am sure they would put up a better show in the firing line.

Things are very quiet now, owing to bad weather. Neither side can do much advancing across country, as the ground is so bad. The part in which we are fighting is very low and very swampy. In some places we have been in trenches up to our waists in water and mud. Not very pleasant I can tell you; especially when one has a full pack and a fur coat and overcoat on. Still, we stick it, and shall do, I hope, until we wash out the Germans absolutely.

I had an exciting experience once, which, at first, I did not like attempting to go through. This is how it happened; On about the second day of our advance on the German's we were advancing across some fields and came to

a wood on the slope of a hill, with a valley between, and then another hill. Going down this slope we were shelled by the Germans' guns. We got to the bottom and had to cross a river about waist deep and lie in skirmishing order on the other side, where we opened fire at German infantry, cavalry and guns.

Before they retired my platoon officer sent myself and another man to scout 400 yards up the next slope, part of which was a ploughed field, at the top of which was a road. We went cautiously up this field, and all at once someone fired at us. Of course we had to stay flat for ten minutes. Then we went on again one each side of the field. We got to the road, and who should be lying under the hedge with a rifle and about 300 rounds of ammunition, but one solitary German. He said: *Don't shoot, I'll come.* We therefore smashed his rifle and bayonet, buried his ammunition, and took him prisoner. It was very exciting to search his pockets etc. but when he fired at us on our approaching I can tell you my temperature was above normal. Since that time, though we have been in such hot shows that we do not know what fear is, and we laugh when a 'Jack Johnson' whizzes over our heads, and you might hear someone say: *Hullo, we had better get out and get under*.

Well, I suppose as soon as the better weather comes we shall start advancing again, and I hope we shall succeed. I saw by the paper that there had been an air raid on England. If that is all the damage they can do by their raiding I should say it does not count much for Germany and their Zeppelins. I also saw in the *Hampshire Telegraph* which mother sent me the letter that I sent you. If you see the publisher again just tell him from me that I look forward every week to receiving the paper. As it is a local paper I can get a glimpse of everything that is going on and plenty of news, which is just what others want. I saw the other week an account of one of my chums who had got his commission. I do not know his address but was very pleased to hear the news and congratulate him. I hope we shall meet again some day, either out here or at home.

I must close now, as I am going to try to snatch an hour's sleep (Germans permitting). I could write a book full of incidents, but hope to be able to tell you all the tales at a later date.

Hampshire Telegraph 29, January 1915

First World War Practice Trenches on Portsdown

An Ordnance Survey aerial photograph of about 1947 appears to show a zig-zag trench system dug into the chalk of Portsdown two or three hundred yards north of Portsdown Hill Road. The rectangular property boundary at the bottom of the photograph is that of Holmdene and the road to the left of this is Beverley Grove.

Zig-zag trenches of this type were typical of the battlefields of the Western Front and there are may instances of similar practice trenches in the United Kingdom. The importance of local geological conditions in the war zone was well understood and it is likely that these trenches in the chalk of Portsdown were dug to simulate conditions in the rolling chalk landscape of the Somme region.

1914
1918
VI
A LA GLORIEUSE MEMOIRE DE TOUS LES MILITAIRES DU
ROYAL WARWICKSHIRE REGIMENT
QUI DONNERENT LEUR VIE AU COURS DE LA REPRISE DE
VENDEGIES-SUR-ECAILLON
LE 24 OCTOBRE 1918
CETTE PLAQUE EST DEDIEE A LEUR COURAGE
PAR LEURS ANCIENS COMPAGNONS D'ARMES DU REGIMENT
A L'OCCASION DU CINQUANTIEME ANNIVERSAIRE DE LA BATAILLE
LE 24 OCTOBRE 1968

The Royal Hampshire Regiment

Since 1815 the balance of power in Europe had been maintained by a series of treaties. In 1888 Wilhelm II was crowned ‘German Emperor and King of Prussia’ and moved from a policy of maintaining the status quo to a more aggressive position. He did not renew a treaty with Russia, aligned Germany with the declining Austro-Hungarian Empire and started to build a Navy rivalling that of Britain. These actions greatly concerned Germany’s neighbours, who quickly forged new treaties and alliances in the event of war.

On 28th June 1914 Franz Ferdinand the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne was assassinated by the Bosnian-Serb nationalist group Young Bosnia who wanted pan-Serbian independence. Franz Joseph's the Austro-Hungarian Emperor (with the backing of Germany) responded aggressively, presenting Serbia with an intentionally unacceptable ultimatum, to provoke Serbia into war. Serbia agreed to 8 of the 10 terms and on the 28th July 1914 the Austro-Hungarian Empire declared war on Serbia, producing a cascade effect across Europe. Russia bound by treaty to Serbia declared war with Austro-Hungary, Germany declared war with Russia and France declared war with Germany. Germany’s army crossed into neutral Belgium in order to reach Paris, forcing Britain to declare war with Germany (due to the Treaty of London (1839) whereby Britain agreed to defend Belgium in the event of invasion). By 4 August 1914 Britain and much of Europe were pulled into a war which would last 1,566 days, cost 8,528,831 lives and 28,938,073 casualties or missing on both sides.

The Regiment formed a total of 32 Battalions and received 82 Battle Honours and 3 Victoria Crosses losing 7,580 men during the course of the war.

14th (1st Portsmouth) Battalion, Hampshire Regiment

3 September 1914: Formed by the Mayor and local committee in Portsmouth.

30 May 1915: Taken over by the War Office.

October 1915: Moved to Witley and joined the 116th Brigade of the 39th Division.

6 March 1916: Mobilised for war and landed at Havre and the Division engaged in various actions on the Western Front.

1916: The fighting on the Ancre, The Battle of Thiepval Ridge, The Battle of the Ancre heights, The Battle of the Ancre.

1917: The Battle of Pilkem Ridge, The Battle of Langemarck, The Battle of the Menin Road Ridge, The Battle of Polygon Wood, The Second Battle of Passchendaele.

22 March 1918: Disbanded in France, at Haut Allaines.

1914 Star

British War Medal

Victory Medal

Some First World War medals – nicknamed ‘Pip’, ‘Squeak’ and ‘Wilfred’

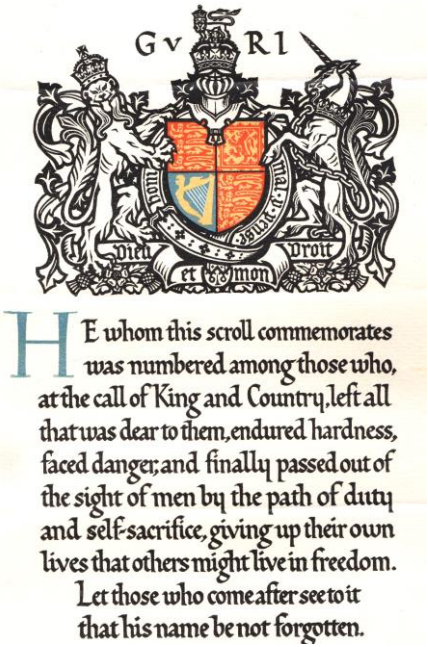
This sterling silver war badge was originally issued on 12 September 1916 to officers and men who were discharged or retired from the military forces as a result of sickness or injury caused by their war service. After April 1918 the eligibility was amended to include civilians serving with the Royal Army Medical Corps, female nurses, staff and aid workers.

Around the rim of the badge was inscribed ‘For King and Empire; Services Rendered’. It became known for this reason also as the ‘Services Rendered Badge. Each badge was also engraved with a unique number on the reverse, although this number is not related to the recipient's Service Number.

The recipient would also receive a certificate with the badge. The badge was made of sterling silver and was intended to be worn on the right breast of a recipient's civilian clothing. It could not be worn on a military uniform.

There were about 1,150,000 silver war badges issued in total for First World War service.

The World War One Death Plaque, (Dead Man's Penny), was issued to the next of kin of servicemen and service women who had fallen.


G v R I
Dieu et mon droit
HE whom this scroll commemorates was numbered among those who, at the call of King and Country, left all that was dear to them, endured hardness, faced danger, and finally passed out of the sight of men by the path of duty and self-sacrifice, giving up their own lives that others might live in freedom.
Let those who come after see to it that his name be not forgotten.

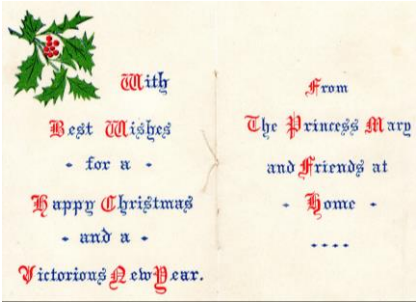
This scroll was sent to the relatives of those whose whose lives had been lost and was accompanied by the following message from King George V:

I join with my grateful people in sending you this memorial of a brave life given for others in the Great War.

Embroidered postcards from World War One are generally known as 'WW1 Silks' and were first produced in 1914.

The cards were hand embroidered on silk mesh and were mostly produced by French and Belgian women refugees who worked in their homes and refugee camps. Because of their beauty and uniqueness these cards were wildly popular with British servicemen on duty in France.

To Mill [Mildred Outen] with love from Jack [Outen] xx. 14/5/16.



In November 1914, an advertisement was placed in the national press inviting monetary contributions to a 'Sailors' & Soldiers' Christmas Fund' which had been created by Princess Mary, the seventeen-year-old daughter of King George V and Queen Mary. The purpose was to provide everyone wearing the King's uniform and serving overseas on Christmas Day 1914 with a 'gift from the nation'.

The response was truly overwhelming, and it was decided to spend the money on an embossed brass box, based on a design by Messrs Adshead and Ramsey. The contents varied considerably; officers and men on active service afloat or at the front received a box containing a combination of pipe, lighter, 1 oz of tobacco and twenty cigarettes in distinctive yellow monogrammed wrappers. Non-smokers and boys received a bullet pencil and a packet of sweets instead. Indian troops often got sweets and spices, and nurses were treated to chocolate. Many of these items were despatched separately from the tins themselves, as once the standard issue of tobacco and cigarettes was placed in the tin there was little room for much else apart from the greetings card.

Princess Mary.

Why the Poppy?

Poppy seeds can lay dormant for many years and they will only germinate and grow when the ground is disturbed. Therefore for them, at least, the conditions in 1914 were ideal with the ground constantly being turned over as the result of all the shelling, bombing and trench digging and when the warm weather came they grew and flowered in abundance.

On May 3, 1915, an exhausted Canadian doctor, Lieutenant Colonel John McRae, was doing all he could for the wounded and dying on the battlefields of Flanders. The unimaginable carnage he witnessed at the front is captured in the moving words of a poem he wrote that day.

John McCrae

Poppies on the Somme

In Flanders Fields
(We Shall not Sleep)

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place: and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved, and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

On 9 November 1918 two days before the Armistice was declared an American lady, Miss Moina Belle Michael, while working at a conference in New York, read John McCrae's poem and was inspired to write her poem, 'We Shall Keep the Faith' as a reply.

Moina Michael

Artificial poppies

We Shall Keep the Faith

Oh! You who sleep in Flanders Fields
Sleep sweet – to rise anew!
We caught the torch you threw
And holding high, we keep the Faith
With All who died.

We cherish too, the poppy red
That grows in fields where valour led,
It seems to signal to the skies
That blood of heroes never dies,
But lends a lustre to the red
Of the flower that blooms above the dead
In Flanders Fields.

And now the Torch and Poppy Red
We wear with honour of our dead
Fear not that you have died for naught
We'll teach the lesson that ye have wrought
In Flanders Fields.

After writing this she went out and bought 24 silk poppies, put one on her lapel, and gave the rest to delegates at the conference. At the same time she made a personal pledge to 'Keep the Faith' and vowed always to wear a red poppy of Flanders fields as a sign of remembrance. This started her long campaign to get the red poppy recognised nationally and eventually on September 29, 1920 the National American Legion agreed to accept it as the United States national emblem of remembrance.

France also adopted the poppy and in 1921 Madame Anna Guérin visited and persuaded Field Marshal Earl Douglas Haig, the founder and president of the British Legion, to adopt the red poppy also as the emblem of remembrance for the legion.

The red poppy was launched during the run up to November 11, 1921 and since that time it has been sold by the Royal British Legion to raise funds in support of their charitable works. All poppies are made by disabled ex-service personnel at the Poppy Factories in Richmond and Edinburgh.

The Story of the Unknown Warrior

The Reverend David Railton, a chaplain at The Front, is believed to have had the idea of honouring the unidentified dead of the Great War. In 1916 he noticed a grave in the garden in Armentieres which had a rough cross bearing the words 'An Unknown British Soldier'. After the war, in 1920, he suggested that Britain honour its unknown war dead officially.

Between four and six bodies were exhumed from the main British battle area in France. The remains were covered with a Union Jack and left overnight in a chapel at St. Pol. Brigadier-General L J Wyatt, who was the commander of British troops in France and Flanders, then selected one. Placed in a coffin made of oak from Hampton Court, the body was transported to Dover on the destroyer HMS *Verdun.*

On the morning of November 11, 1920, the second anniversary of Armistice Day, the Unknown Warrior was drawn on a gun carriage in procession to the Cenotaph where King George V placed a wreath on the coffin. At 11am the nation observed the Two Minute Silence and then the body was taken to Westminster Abbey and buried at the west end of the nave.

The tomb contains soil from France and is covered by a slab of Belgian marble on which is inscribed these words from 2 Chronicles 24:16:

'They buried him among the kings because he had
done good toward God and toward his house'

Within the first week 1,250,000 people filed past the 'Unknown Warrior' to pay their respects to all of the unidentified war dead. It is now one of the most visited war graves in the world and is the only part of the Abbey floor that is not walked on.

The Royal British Legion

The Tomb of the Unknown Warrior

Beneath this stone rests the body of a British Warrior unknown by name or rank brought from France to lie among the most illustrious of the land and buried here on Armistice Day 11 Nov: 1920, in the presence of His Majesty King George V his Ministers of State and Chiefs of his Forces and a vast concourse of the nation.

Thus are commemorated the many multitudes who during the Great War of 1914-1918 gave the most that man can give life itself for God for King and Country for loved ones at home and Empire for the sacred cause of Justice and the Freedom of the World.

They buried him among the Kings because he had done good toward God and toward his house.

Around the main inscription are four texts:

The Lord knoweth them that are his.
Greater love hath no man than this.
Unknown a known, dying and behold we live.
In Christ shall all be made alive.

The Cenotaph in Whitehall, London

The Cenotaph, which literally means Empty Tomb in Greek, was initially a wood and plaster construction intended as a small part of the Peace Day events of July 1919. At its unveiling the base of the monument was spontaneously covered in wreaths to the dead and missing from the Great War.

Such was the extent of public enthusiasm for the construction it was decided that the Cenotaph should become a permanent and lasting memorial. At the request of the then Prime Minister, Lloyd George, the present day Cenotaph was designed by Edwin Lutyens and built in Portland stone.

It carries the simple inscription ‘The Glorious Dead’ and was unveiled by King George V on November 11, 1920.

For the Fallen

By Laurence Binyon

With proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children,
England mourns her dead across the sea.
Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit,
Fallen in the cause of the free.

Solemn the drums thrill; Death august and royal
Sings sorrow up to immortal spheres,
There is music in the midst of desolation
And a glory that shines upon our tears.

They went with songs to the battle, they were young,
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted;
They fell with their faces to the foe.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

They mingle not with their laughing comrades again;
They sit no more at familiar tables at home;
They have no lot in our labour of the day-time;
They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes profound,
Felt as a well spring that is hidden from sight,
To the innermost heart of their own land they are known
As the stars are known to the Night;

As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust,
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain;
As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness,
To the end, to the end, they remain.

England Expects
and
England must not and
will not be disappointed.
RECRUITS WANTED
FOR THE
ROYAL NAVAL DIVISION
To serve during the Period of the War
AGE 18 TO 38 - MEAN CHEST MEASUREMENT 34 inches
HEIGHT 5 ft. 3½ inches.
There are NO EXPENSES incurred in joining
FREE KITS and FOOD being provided.
Men are paid at the Service Rate of 1/3 per day - Separation
allowances are made to the families of Married Men.
Apply to :-
THE ROYAL NAVAL DIVISION.
Recruiting Office: 112 THE STRAND, LONDON, W.C.

World War One posters

‘Reaction’

A First World War Poem

Edward George Till. 1877-1933
Ex Gunner No. 160910, C/75. Royal Field Artillery
England 1919

The Royal Artillery Badge
‘Everywhere That Right and Glory Lead’

The 1881 census shows Edward living in North Street, Havant, with his father, a cab driver, his mother, Jane, and his younger brother Bertram. In 1900 Edward married Beatrice Stallard, whose father Charles was a Havant parchment maker, and they had three daughters. Edward was working as a chamois leather dresser before World War One and he was forty when, as a gunner in the Royal Field Artillery, he was sent to France in December 1917. Records show that Edward was hospitalised twice with influenza before being wounded on 27 September 1918. When putting up a barrage an enemy shell burst close to him and part of it hit his right shoulder. He was operated on in a hospital at Le Tréport and then sent home in the hospital ship *Carisbrook Castle* to the Royal Victoria Hospital at Netley. As he was 20% disabled he was granted a small pension. At some stage he was promoted to foreman at Messrs Stent’s glove factory in West Street.

The family lived at 4 Waterloo Road, Havant, from about 1916, which is where he wrote this emotive poem in 1919.

His poem records what he, and many others, experienced on the front line. The kind treatment he received for his injury, the friendship he made with one of the enemy, and his return to 'Blighty'.

His lying in bed awake after the war going over his memories indicates the trauma they all suffered, usually defined as just 'shell shock', Such memories are no doubt the reason why so many did not talk about what they had gone through.

Edward's poem is published with the kind permission of his granddaughter, Mrs Vera Nevitt.

'Reaction'

You want to know why I am restless
Tonight as I'm lying in bed
You also ask me the question
Why can't you sleep tonight Ted
That question is easy to answer
It's tired the body may be
But the mind is restless and wanders far away
Over the sea

To scenes that will ne'er be forgotten
Scenes of bloodshed and strife
Scenes where the Old Chums have fallen
Giving their all, their life
Now that the hours are quiet
And darkness reigns over light
My mind sees those scenes o so vivid
That's why I can't sleep tonight

You tell me to think of a subject
Something merry and bright
Don't let your thoughts go out yonder
They've been there enough for tonight
I try hard your theory to follow
But hardly before I'm aware
My mind is wandering swiftly
From scene to scene over there

When you just asked me that question
I was miles and miles away
We had put up a barrage that morning
Then moved up again the same day
There, in our new position
Lying dead just as they fell
Were six of the German soldiers
And no doubt we'd wished them to hell

In life it was all strife between us
Each other we tried to lay low
But that feeling gave way to pity
As we gaze on our fallen foe
Each Sub.* took one of the fallen to bury
Just under the ground
Though there was no burial service
Our feelings were genuine and sound

'D' Sub buried one of the soldiers
In a hole that a shell had made
And over his shattered body
His greatcoat we gently laid
We made a little wooden cross
Inscribed these words and date
An unknown German soldier
August the second one eight

I think there was someone longing for him
In his native land
Anxiously, patiently waiting
To feel the firm grip of his hand
We found in his tunic pocket a photo
No doubt of the one
Who was waiting each day for a letter
Whose writing was done

She receives an official letter
He's missing since 2.9.18
What is her thoughts, her feelings, as she prays
She hopes and waits
For the one who is buried out yonder
The one that will never return
Perhaps today she is wondering
Of his fate, she will never learn

My mind wanders swiftly onward
And I see another scene,
I am standing in a graveyard
Midst the little mounds of green
It is at Beryles-au-bois
I can see it, o so plain
The rows of wooden crosses
The Regiment, number, name
There, coming down the highway

Not so very far away
I can see some Scottish Guardsmen
Their thoughts, ah, who can say?
They are carrying a comrade
To his long and final rest
And as so often happened
He had been, one of the best

I can see again those pipers
As they play their sad refrain
The pipes sound full of sorrow
Full of anguish, grief and pain
They seem to wail with pity
Just as though they felt the strain
Of the passing of a comrade
Who would not be seen again

I see again that touching scene
Far away, but yet so near
I can see again those pipers
Try to hide the dropping tear
As they file beside the graveside
As they take their last farewell
Of their Chum who'd fought beside them
A good and staunch Old Pal

Perhaps you think it I was childish
To show their feelings so
But remember out in Flanders
Chums like that was good to know
Those men had faced death often
With not a sign of fear
When over the top was ordered
Then death; it was very near

That scene I leave behind me
My mind is off once more
I am standing on the Ypres Front
Midst wreckage all galore
O the scene of desolation
The mud, well, just compare
What we call mud in England
Is like their dust out there
And as I gaze around me
The scene that meets my eye
Is one of all destruction
For there, it lay close by
The shattered tanks and lorries
A smashed up aeroplane
The limbers, guns and wagons
All smashed, but not in vain

It’s Winnipeg Corner, Ypres
January eleven one eight
Jerry as found out our battery
And shells us, at gun fire rate
‘F’ Sub. the first ones to suffer
A shell bursts under their gun
With a flash and a roar that's deafening
The work of that gun is done

She’s picked up just like a feather
Dropped about 12 yards away
Twisted, warped and battered
Deep in a shell hole she lay
She had been a good old servant
Barked with fury night and day
It just raised the devil in us
Remarks passed
One was – we will pay

‘C’ Sub. was the next one to cop it
Not only is their gun knocked out
For the place is set all on fire
With live ammunition about
The gunners first thoughts is to stop it
We fought hard that fire to quell
Knowing well the risk and danger
From a heated bursting shell

Yes; we won, that fire we conquered
At last it was all put out
But then it was only our duty
So it’s nothing to shout about
And when my thoughts go out yonder
I see all those scenes once again
I say to myself Ted, be thankful
You're back home in Blighty again

Three guns that day they disabled
The battery, was half knocked out
Still, we had 3 guns to work with
And fired 18-pound shells about
We had plenty of ammunition
We used it, those 3 guns to feed
Old Jerry tried hard to smash us
But found out he didn't succeed

I think of those fallen comrades
For them their life's race had run
May they, on the last day-of-judgement
Hear Him say welcome; well done
There are some of those little crosses
On them, it just simply state
The Regiment, name the number
And January, Eleven One Eight.

That scene of strife and destruction is changed
It is all quietness
I lay between sheet and blanket
In the three two Central Clearing Station
There, in the bed just beside me is a Hun
Perhaps we had tried
To give each other the ticket
As we fought each for our side
He looked hard at me though uncertain
As if he was trying to know
What was the feeling between us
Was it to be friend or foe?

He passed me a faded old photo
Of his wife and children dear
I showed him, the one that I carried
Of those, so far yet so near
That settled the question between us
We were pals in that C.C.S.

The passing of those faded photos
Did more than our words could express
His thoughts were for home, wife and kiddies
My thoughts, in a similar strain
His words to my words were useless
But the action was simple and plain

When he left that C.C.S.
He gave me a souvenir
A piece of his Iron Cross ribbon
To him it was precious and dear
Then with a long final handshake
A grip that no words could explain
We parted, the best of old comrades
Yet perhaps we were fighting again

When I look at that piece of ribbon
The piece in the little brass frame
I say to myself; well old comrade
I hope you and me are the same
I am home surrounded with loved ones
I hope you are surrounded as well
At home with the wife and the kiddies
That's the wish of your C.C.S. pal

He fought for his home and country
I fought for justice and right
He did as his country told him
My conscience said: go out and fight
He was a genuine German soldier
I'm sure he will stand the same chance
When we meet on the last day-of-judgment
As the Tommie that now lives in Hants

It is night, the month December
I am on the wooden track
Making for our gun position
With my pal, my old Chum Mac.
Hanging on behind the limber
It is dark, can hardly see
There's a slip, a splash, a scramble

Is it Mac? No, it is me
O by strike, whatever's happened
In a flash I'm on my back
In a shell-hole, ice and water
The limber wheel slipped off the track
Are you hurt? no I don't think so
This ere water, is mighty cool
Well I'm d — you in there bathing
What do you think you're at Blackpool?

Where's your hand right ho? I've got it
There I stand beside old Mac
With the clothes upon me freezing
Shudders running down my back
Then we get the limber righted
Feels as though my bones will crack
Off once more we started trudging
Right along the wooden track.

We trudge along
Mac is saying, I've just thought perhaps that slip
Will turn out a real good blessing
Perhaps you've froze the blighters stiff
If you don't do any scratching
When you get down into kip
Let me know, 'darn me' I'll freeze em
Clothes and all I'll make a slip

The funny side we always found it
Kept us going over there
Monday morn till Sunday midnight
Got like that we didn't care
When a shell went whistling o'er us
You would here, that's not for me
Never had my name upon it
Chance gone west for old Blighty.

Were we ever superstitious?
Yes we were; no doubt you've heard
Lighting fags with only one match
Not one there would be the third
If it was the very last match
To be found in the Brigade
Out it went, when it lit two fags
You'd light yours from a Chum's fag

Once again I see a dug-out
Lying there partly inside
I can see again a Tommie
Who had got so far, then died
He had used his small field dressing
Done his best his life to save
But grim death had been the victor
His life for England gave

He had kept a little treasure
From one at home so dear
Just a little picture postcard
With roses all so clear
And the verse that was upon it
Told its message plain and true
Made me think of her in England
Read the verse and so will you

Somewhere a heart is waiting
Waiting dear for you
Somewhere a silent memory longs
For your love so true
Somewhere a heart is waiting
Love is not in vain
For the sunshine will break through the clouds one day
When your heart is mine again

She is one like many hundreds
Watched, waited, prayed in vain
For the ones they loved out yonder
The ones that there will remain
When at times the clouds are darkest
When the sunshine is denied
God bless the homes and loved ones
Of all those that fought and died

There's one scene that wants forgetting
That's my last day with the guns
We were putting up a barrage
And the shells were fired by tons
We were working hard and steady
My old Chum close by my side
When a shell burst in amongst us
My Chum, he fell, he died

It knocked out half the battery
Some of them, to rise no more
And the others I can't describe it
They were battered cut and tore
I can see my poor old Comrade lying dead
Just as he fell
Then they lift him very gently
From off the old gun's trail

I can hear the young 'Subs' order
Cool and calm as on parade
Carry on the barrage boys
Then things began to fade
I can hear the old gun answer
As she fires her eighteen pound
With a roar of cold defiance
I had fired my final round

I can see that first aid station
Once again I feel the pain
Now I'm in that Army lorry
Thoughts of Blighty once again
Now I'm at the clearing station
Where they cleaned me up a bit
Where they marked me operation
'Cause old Jerry made a hit

Now I'm on that rough old railway
In a truck that goes pell-mell
How it jerks, it jars, it rattles
How I wish the Huns to hell
Once again I see that angel
Just a girl – a Red Cross nurse
O t'was good the way she helped me
I was glad that shell did burst

I can see again that table
Where they put me off to sleep
When I awoke I think I'm dreaming
I'm bewildered fogged complete
I can hear a rumble-rumble
What it is I can't explain
For you see while still unconscious
They had put me in a train
'Le Tréport', 'Hotel Trianion'

Seems as though the world is dead
Yesterday was in a barrage
Here today and in a bed
I can see that smiling sister
Hear her whisper near my cheek
You're for Blighty in the morning
What a night seemed like a week

Just content I'm traveling homeward
Labelled in a Red Cross train
What a feeling can't describe it
Don't care if there's snow or rain
Did I like old France and Belgium
I don't know, there is a doubt
Seems to me I must have liked it
Would not walk, was carried out

There she lay. A Castle Liner
'Carisbrook Castle' is her name
What a load of human wreckage
Torn and battered, blind and lame
Passengers she'd carried thousands
Titled folks on pleasure bent
But they never found the pleasure
As that load to Blighty went

I can see there at Southampton
Wounded Tommies what a sight
Row and row we lay on stretchers
Then was parted left and right
Once again I'm down at Netley
Quite contented, in a bed
Thanking God for all his mercies
No. 160910 Ted

I see one scene that's cheerful
Of those scenes of far away
It is those Red Cross nurses
Working for us night and day
How they worked to ease our trouble
Though at times well-nigh fagged out
Yet they always came up smiling
What it cost them there's no doubt
For it needs a lot of courage
To keep a smiling face

But they knew it was a tonic
Helped us each, in our life's race
With their cheery words of comfort
And their many acts to please
It was to them a pleasure
When they put us at our ease
God bless the Red Cross nurses
Is many a Tommies prayer
To us they were like angels
As we lay helpless over there
And when a case was hopeless
When nought could save a life
They soothed the last few moments
As mother would or wife

Now you know why I'm restless
My mind will keep wandering back
To the days in trenches and dug-outs
On duckboards and the wooden track
Again I hear ‘Battery’, ‘Action’
The S.O.S. signal shows bright
The roar of the guns I hear them
As they answer that signal of light

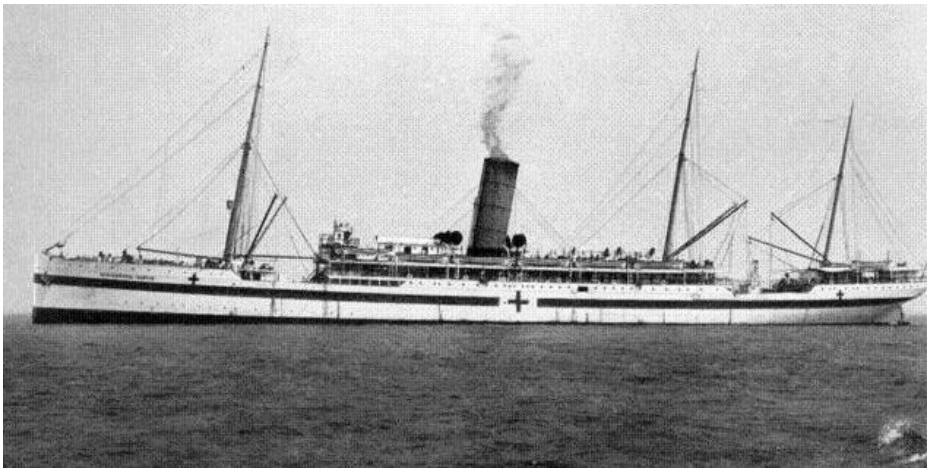
At night time when it is quiet
Directly I close my eyes in the dark
Those scenes, Real visions that float slowly by
Now I feel tired and weary
I think that I shall soon sleep
O would it be a pleasure
To sleep very sound and deep

It is said our nerves are shaken
It’s no wonder t'was a strain
I hope that I shall never
Hear of scenes like that again
There are times I can't forget them
But ‘Nil desperandum’ I say
For time will be the healer
If we live in hope and pray

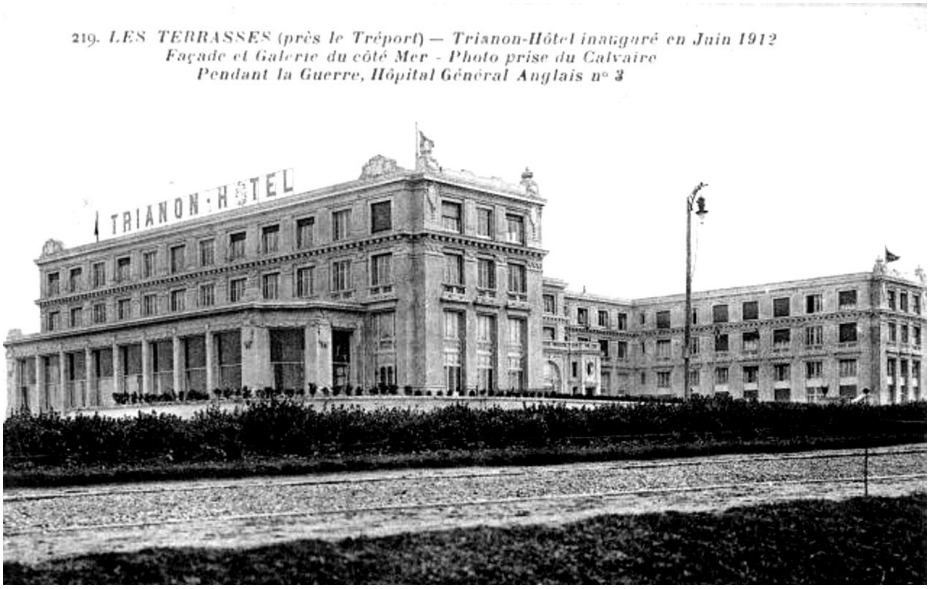
*Sub.

The following explanation of the composition of a gun battery has been provided by the Imperial War Museum:

> *This refers to Royal Artillery battery sub units; a subsection consisted of a single gun and limber drawn by six horses (with three drivers), eight gunners (riding on the limber or mounted on their own horses), and an ammunition wagon also drawn by six horses (with three drivers).*
>
> *The fact that these batteries have alphabetical designations rather than numerical, suggests these are Royal Horse Artillery (RHA). A RHA battery had six 13-pounder field guns and included 5 officers and 200 men.*



The *Carisbrook Castle* as a hospital ship in 1915. This Union Castle liner was commandeered two days before the formal declaration of war in 1914. Fitted with 439 beds she crossed the English Channel bringing wounded troops home from the Western Front.


219. LES TERRASSES (près le Tréport) — Trianon-Hôtel inauguré en Juin 1912
Façade et Galerie du côté Mer - Photo prise du Calvaire
Pendant la Guerre, Hôpital Général Anglais n° 3
TRIANON-HÔTEL

The Trianon Hotel at Le Tréport, which became General Hospital No. 3 for Canadian and British wounded during World War One.

When I pass by the War Memorial
Just one glance my mind wanders back
I can see the mud, the slush, the shell holes,
the duckboards, the old track.

I can see my fallen Old Comrades
And although I know they are dead
I can hear them whisper
Remember your Old Pals ‘neath Poppies so Red’.

Words written by Edward George Till

Remember all those who have laid down their lives in the cause of Justice, Freedom and Peace in the world.

Second World War

MAURICE CECIL ASHER – Leading Writer P/MX 53540, HMS *Jersey*.
Died: 7 December 1939, aged 23.
PORTSMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL
Born: 17 February 1916, at 51 Laburnum Grove, Portsmouth. Son of Francis Cecil and Elizabeth Asher, née Hawkins. Baptised in St Mark's, Portsmouth where his parents had married in April, 1909. The 1911 census has Francis, aged 28, as 'Sergeant, Army Pay Corps'. When Maurice was killed in 1939 his parents were living in the Hulbert Road, Bedhampton.

HMS *Jersey*

J-Class Destroyer ordered from J S White at Cowes on 25 March 1937, launched on the 26 September 1938, commissioned for service in the 7th Destroyer, Flotilla, Home Fleet.

On 7 December 1939 HMS *Jersey* was hit by a torpedo, fired from the German destroyer SMS *Erich Giese*, when on her way back from laying a minefield off Cromer. Ten of ship's company lost their lives and 13 other were injured. This caused a large fire and repairs took ten months.

Disabled ship taken in tow by HMS *Juno* and joined by HMS *Jackal* as cover. 9 December 1939: Docked at Immingham in Humber Graving Dock for temporary repair. (Note: HM Destroyer *Janus*, also in the Humber, did not

depart until the visibility improved. Tug *Yorkshireman* (251 tons) later took over *Jersey* tow to Immingham.)
7 January 1940: Undocked and taken to Amos and Smith shipyard, Hull for permanent repair work. From February to August she under repair in Hull.
24 September: Post repair trials on completion of shipyard work.
10 October: Post repair harbour trials. Completed sea trials.

History by Lt Cdr Geoffrey B Mason RN (rtd) 2003

HARRY RICHARD BEACH – Leading Seaman JX 134081, HM Submarine *Thames.*
Died: 3 August 1940.
PORTSMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL

One of three sons Harry was born at 30 New Road, Bedhampton, in 1914 to Henry Phillip and Vera Esther Beach. Henry, his father, was an ambulance driver. Harry, known as Charlie at home, married Mary Brown of Charles Street, Dundee. Upon joining the crew of HM Submarine *Thames* Harry was pleased to find his neighbour and schoolboy friend, Leonard Harris, was also serving on the *Thames.* Leading Seaman Beach was a brother to A.B. Peter Beach who had gained the D.S.M. a few months previously. All three sons were serving in the Navy. Harry's death was reported in the national newspapers.

THE ADMIRAL'S WIFE SHARES SORROW

Just two days after he was married, Leading Seaman Harry Richard beach said goodbye to his young bride and to his mother and father.

He had been transferred at quick notice to a new ship – HM Submarine *Thames*. He went aboard the *Thames* in place of a man who had to face a disciplinary inquiry. The submarine sailed. She did not return.

Young Harry Beach had joined the *Thames* for her last trip.

The tragedy came to his mother – Mrs H. Beach of New Road, Bedhampton, as she listened to the wireless. It was her birthday.

She heard that her son was missing presumed lost in HM Submarine *Thames.*

She tried to realise that her lad, at the age of twenty one, after only forty eight hours of the married happiness she had so much wished for him, would not come back.

Then the news was told to Harry Beach's bride of two days. She was Miss Mary Brown, of Charles Street, Dundee, before she married. She is only twenty two. To the girl it was sheer heartbreak.

In these tragic hours Harry Beach's mother received a letter. It was from Lady Talbot, wife of Vice-Admiral Sir Cecil Talbot, who also had lost a son on the *Thames* – Lieutenant Talbot, one of the senior officers.

This was her letter:

I Know

Dear Mrs Beach,

May I send you very deep sympathy from my husband and myself in the sorrow that you are going through.

I am the mother of Lieutenant Talbot of the same ship and I do know how hard this grief is to bear – we who have watched them and loved them so deeply since babyhood.

If it is that they have passed on, we must be very brave, and we know they are always near us, helping us and praying for us: and let us be quite certain of the love of God, whatever goes.

A high official of the dockyard writes: 'We knew the officers and men of the ship as a very happy band of brothers, and what is more, the most efficient crowd never missing any detail.'

I do pray Dear Mrs Beach that god will bless and comfort us all.

Yours sincerely and with heartfelt sympathy,

Bridget Talbot

Daily Mirror, Wednesday, 9 October 1940

Harry Beach's mother told the *Daily Mirror* last night: *I think it was very nice of an officer's mother to write such a consoling message to me.*

WILLIAM DAVID GORDON BOND – Sergeant
Pilot 903298, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.
Died: 24 February 1941, aged 19.
CAVERSFIELD (ST LAURENCE)
CHURCHYARD, Oxfordshire.

Born: 1921 in Portsmouth. Son of William Charles and Ivy Lillah Bond, née Cutland, of The Glen, Glebe Avenue, Bedhampton.

William enlisted in the Royal air Force at Uxbridge between September 1939 and June 1940, and was appointed as a class F reservist.

The RAFVR was formed in July 1936 to provide individuals to supplement the Auxiliary Air Force (AAF) which had been formed in 1925 by the local Territorial Associations.

The Commonwealth War graves in St Lawrence Churchyard, Caversfield, Oxfordshire.

The churchyard includes 25 Commonwealth war graves connected with RAF Bicester, dating from before and during World War Two. This was a training station for Bomber Command. William was 'killed on active service'.

RONALD THOMAS BRADSHAW – Flight Lieutenant (Flying Instructor) 44308, 216 Squadron, Royal Air Force.
Died: 4 November 1942 in a flying accident, aged 34.
HELIOPOLIS WAR CEMETERY, Egypt.

Born: 1908 at 94 Grafton Street, Mile End, Portsmouth. Son of Richard, Chief Stoker RN, and Alice Anne Bradshaw. Husband of Violet Ellen Margaret Bradshaw of Sturry, Kent. At the time of his death Ronald was living at 56 Park Lane, Bedhampton, with his wife. Apparently a 216 sqdn Hudson stalled and crashed on take-off at Khanka Airfield on the above date and all on board lost their lives, including Ronald Bradshaw.

Lockheed Hudson aircraft

In July 1942 the squadron received a number of Lockheed Hudson aircraft which were used for supply and casualty evacuation duties. The squadron was used to provide regular transport services around the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

JOHN A CAREY – 2nd Lieutenant 73053, First Medium Regiment, Royal Artillery.
Died: 23 May 1940, aged 22.
BEDHAMPTON, ST THOMAS' CHURCHYARD, north of the chancel. Also commemorated on the St Brelade, Jersey, memorial.

1934 photograph of John at Elizabeth College. *Mike Martel*

John took part in the rear-guard action at Dunkirk. His regiment (1st Medium Regt. R.A.) was one of three ordered to hold, at all costs, and cover the embarkation of the British Expeditionary Force. It was in action for two days and nights, fired off all its ammunition, and then blew up its guns. John was wounded by shell splinters and died on the hospital ship at sea on 23 May 1940.

> *Draped in a Union Jack, on which rested the deceased officer's sword and cap, the coffin containing the body of Lt John Anthony Carey RA, who died from wounds received at sea, rested before the altar at St Joseph's Church, Havant, on Monday night, prior to the requiem mass on Tuesday morning.*
>
> *Hampshire Telegraph*, 31 May 1940

Son of Lt.-Col. John Lionel Romilly Carey, DSO, formerly Royal Artillery and of Mary Gertrude Carey (née Dobson), of St Brelades, Jersey, Channel Islands; husband of Dorothy Margaret Carey, née Shaw, of Bedhampton.

John Carey's grave in St Thomas' churchyard

DEREK JOHN CHASE – Pilot officer (Navigator) 175174, 156 Squadron, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.
Died: 23 April 1944, aged 31.
REICHSWALD FOREST WAR CEMETERY
Born on 28 February 1913, baptised at St Simon's Southsea. Parents address 149, Albert Road, Southsea. Derek married Jean Coles at Gosport in the last quarter of 1938. Before the war he was a dispensing Chemist in Gosport.

Son of Henry John, chemist and druggist, and Agnes Elizabeth Chase, née Griffiths, husband of Jean Chase of Havant. Member of the Pharmaceutical Society. The will index shows Derek's address as Bury Road, Alverstoke.

Historical information

Derek Chase was in the crew of a Lancaster Mk III on a mission to Dusseldorf when the plane was hit by flak while flying at 19,000 feet. It crashed in the target area killing all seven men. See 156 squadron website.

Reichswald Forest War Cemetery Britischer Ehrenfriedhof, Kleve, Germany

DENNIS FORD – Flying Officer Pilot 37631, 204 Squadron, Royal Air Force.
Died: 15 October 1939, aged 27.
HOOE (ST JOHN) CHURCHYARD EXTENSION, Devon. There are twelve Commonwealth burials of the 1914-18 war here. There are a further thirteen of the 1939-45 war, four being unidentified seamen of the Merchant Navy.
Born 10 December 1911 at 5 Balfour Road, Portsmouth. Son of Charles Walter and Frances Ford, of Harbour View, Glebe Park Avenue, Bedhampton. Died at Plymouth Sound. Probate to Charles Walter Ford, retired engineer Lt Cdr RN.

In June 1939, 204 Squadron began to receive Sunderland bombers and following the outbreak of war the squadron began patrols of the English Channel and Western Approaches. The Sunderland was a British Flying Boat Patrol Bomber.

Hooe (St John) churchyard

GEORGE EDWIN ALFRED FREELAND – Lieutenant (E) RN, HMS *Neptune.*

Died: 19 December 1941, aged 37.

PLYMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL

Born: circa 1904, son of Edwin and Elizabeth Freeland. George married Lily Elizabeth Jacobs in Steyning, Sussex, in 1926; they lived in Maylands Road, Bedhampton.

HMS *Neptune* was a Leander-class light cruiser, built at Portsmouth Dockyard and commissioned into the Royal Navy in 1934.

At 01.06 on the morning of 19 December, HMS *Neptune* ran into an uncharted minefield off Tripoli and struck the first of four mines; she sank before dawn at 04.04 with the loss of 764 officers and men. Just one man was rescued by an Italian torpedo boat, after five days in the water, and was taken prisoner.

THOMAS IAN GAY – Lieutenant (E) RN – HMS *Ark Royal.*

Died: 1 August 1941, aged 23.

PORTSMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL

Born: 1918, son of the late Commander George Murch Gay RN, and of Olive Trounsell Gay, née Allen, of Stockheath, Havant. Thomas Gay's father served in Africa throughout World War One and died in 1933 when Thomas was fifteen.

Historical Information

On 1 August 1941, after 810 Squadron had delivered an attack on Alghero airfield, a returning Swordfish crashed while landing on HMS *Ark Royal*, detonating a 40 pound bomb that had hung up in its rack. Thomas Gay was one of five fatalities.

HMS *Ark Royal* with Swordfish aircraft. She was built by Cammell Laird and Company Ltd at Birkenhead, England, and completed in November 1938. She was the first ship on which the hangars and flight deck were an integral part of the hull, instead of an add-on or part of the superstructure.

REX GEORGE – Marine PO/X113288, No. 45 Royal Marine Commando, E Troop..
Died: 20 August 1944, aged 20. Mentioned in Despatches.
RANVILLE WAR CEMETERY, Calvados, France.

Born: circa 1924. Son of Arthur Percy and Clara George, née Legg, of Park Lane, Bedhampton.

No. 45 RM Commando, Royal Marines, landed on 6 June 1944 with the rest of the 1st Special Service Brigade on Sword Beach and was involved in the fighting in France.

Marine Rex George was killed during Royal Marine Operations in Normandy. He received a MiD for 'good services with the 21st Army group'.

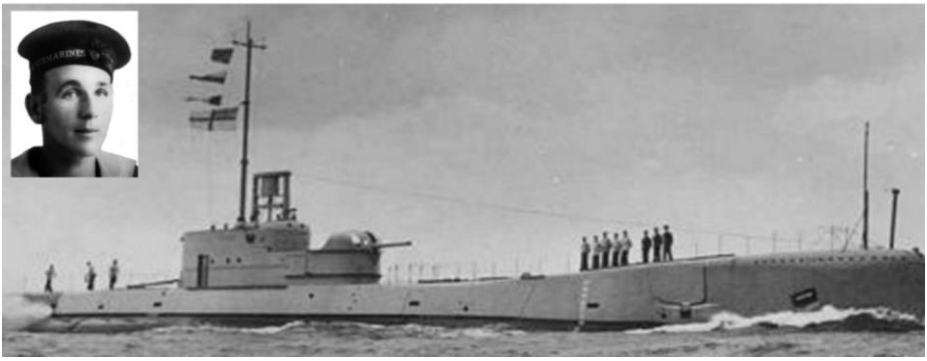
Hampshire Telegraph, 7 September 1945

Ranville War Cemetery France

Historical information

Ranville was the first village to be liberated by elements of the British 6th Airborne Division on the morning of 6 June 1944 (D-Day) when the nearby (Pegasus Bridge) over the Caen Canal was attacked and captured. The cemetery contains the grave of Lieutenant Den Brotheridge – considered to be the first Allied death on D-Day.

LEONARD GEORGE ROWLAND HARRIS – Able Seaman P/JX 136307, HM Submarine *Thames*.
Died: 3 August 1940, aged 24.
PORTSMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL
Son of Joseph Leonard and Ethel Maud Harris, née Outen, of 33 New Road, Bedhampton. Leonard married Elsie May West in 1937. See also **HARRY BEACH.**



Leornard Harris and HM Submarine *Thames*

Historical information

On the 22 July the *Thames* succeeded in attacking the German torpedo boat *Luchs*, west of the Skagerrak. *Luchs* was shielding the *Gneisenau*, which must have been the intended target. The submarine was reported overdue on 3 August 1940 and had probably struck a mine off Norway. As HMS *Thames* was operating from Dundee with the 2nd Submarine Flotilla when she was lost, her 63 crew members are all commemorated in Dundee.

BEHAMPTON SCHOOLMATES SUBMARINE VICTIMS

Two former Bedhampton schoolmates are among the naval men missing from H.M. submarine Thames officially announced as long overdue and presumed lost.

The missing men are Leonard George Harris (25) a seaman gunner, and Leading Seaman Harry Richard (Charlie) Beach (26) of 30 New Road, Bedhampton. They were members of Bedhampton choir before joining the Navy.

Harris is a son of ex-Chief Stoker Harris, of 33 New Road, Bedhampton, who served in submarines during the last war. Harris jnr had had remarkable escapes from death.

He was a member of the crew of H.M. submarine Spearfish, which gained renown by accomplishing a daring and dangerous exploit in the early months of the war.

The vessel was missing and feared lost for some time, but eventually reached home waters in a crippled condition.

UNUSUAL INCIDENT

Harris like fellow members of the crew suffered severely through the ordeal and had to receive medical treatment on his arrival home.

Some years ago he figured in an unusual incident which nearly cost him his life. He was serving aboard a warship in eastern waters, when the captain gave a reception to a native chief and his party. In the evening the crew were also given entertainment.

During the night however Harris began to walk in his sleep, and groping his way along, came to a cabin. His outstretched hands touched the face of one of the officers and awakened him. The officer, fearing that a lascar or one of the natives had entered his cabin with some ulterior motive, jumped out of his bunk and gripped the intruder by the throat and handled him so severely that he nearly strangled him.

LIFE DESPAIRED OF

It was eventually realised that the intruder was an innocent member of the crew – Harris. So thoroughly had the officer handled the intruder that Harris's life was for a while despaired of, but after some time in the hospital he recovered.

This remarkable incident was recorded in a book written by the ship's padre at the time. Harris and the officer concerned remained on the best of terms after the incident had been explained.

Recently Harris's home in S.E. England was severely damaged by a bomb, but his wife escaped serious injury. At that time the Thames had not been heard of for some weeks.

The Evening News, Monday, 7 October 1940

HARRY FRANK HUGGETT – Private 5184808, Essex Regiment, 1/4th (TA) Battalion.
Born: Dorking 1921.
Died: 17 March 1944, aged 22.
CASSINO WAR CEMETERY, Italy.

Son of Harry and Florence Lizzie Huggett, née Martin, of Bedhampton. According to the UK Army Roll of Honour Harry Frank Huggett enlisted in the Gloucestershire Regiment but was in the Essex Regiment (Infantry) when he died.

Cassino war cemetery

Historical information

The Essex Territorial Army Battalion was a line infantry regiment. The Battalion gave distinguished service in North Africa, Italy and Greece. They took part in the Battle of El Alamein and in the final battles which led to the surrender of the Axis forces in Africa. In Italy the Battalion played a crucial role in the Battle of Monte Cassino.

Harry died six days after the Allies invaded the Italian mainland; at the same time an armistice was made with the Italians who then re-entered the war on the Allied side.

Whenever possible, these war memorials were placed within military

cemeteries near the theatres of operations. During the Battle of Monte Cassino, Cassino saw some of the fiercest fighting of the Italian Campaign, the town itself and the dominating Monastery Hill proving the most stubborn obstacles encountered in the advance towards Rome. The majority of those buried in the war cemetery died in the battles during these months. As of 2012 there are 4,271 Commonwealth servicemen of the Second World War buried or commemorated at Cassino War Cemetery. From Canada, 194.
Service members are honoured on the Cassino Memorial.

KENNETH WALTER IERSTON

Ordinary Seaman P/JX 156903, HMS *Hood*.
Died: 24 May 1941, aged 19.
PORTSMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL
Photograph courtesy of the HMS Hood Association; contributed by Kenneth Ierston's nephew, Christopher Barrett.

Born Fareham, where his father was a butcher. Kenneth was the eldest of four children, born between 1922 and 1935. By 1941 his parents, Thomas and Naomi Ierston,were living at 'San Remo' Brooklands Road Bedhampton,

Historical information

HMS *Hood* was a Battle Cruiser originally commissioned in 1920. By World War Two she was outdated and underwent several overhauls. She was due for a major re-build in 1941, but the outbreak of war in 1939 forced the ship into service without the scheduled up grades.

Kenneth went down with HMS *Hood.* The ship was in the Denmark Strait

when she was hit first by a shell from the *Prinz Eugen,* which ignited ammunition stored on her deck, and then by the *Bismarck,* which hit her magazine amidships causing a huge explosion and breaking the *Hood* in two. She sank almost instantly and only three men were rescued out of a total complement of over 1,418.

WILLIAM ERNEST IRWIN – Electrical Artificer 4th Class P/MX 53497, HMS *Janus.*
Born: 26 February 1921.
Died: 23 January 1944, aged 22.
PORTSMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL

Son of William Vincent and Susan Lily Irwin, née Folland; husband of Mary Irwin, née Webster, of Bedhampton. 1939 register shows his father as a ship's joiner in H.M. Dockyard, and young William as an Electrical Artificer's Apprentice. At this time they are living in St Piran's Avenue, Portsmouth, and William is single.

Historical Information

HMS *Janus* was a J class Destroyer, commissioned on the 3 August 1939.

HMS *Janus* sank when she was hit by an aerial torpedo during an air attack by the Luftwaffe off Anzio, in Italy. 158 officers and men lost their lives and 94 survivors were rescued by two other ships.

Electrical Artificer William Ernest Irwin. R.N. who has been reported missing, presumed killed, whilst serving in H.M.S. Janus, was the only son of Mr and Mrs W.V. Irwin of Maylands Road, Bedhampton, formerly of St

Piran's Avenue, Portsmouth. He had a brilliant career at the Northern Secondary School, and was awarded The Dawes Cup in 1938 for the best second year apprentice craftsman in the Electrical Department of the Dockyard, and a book perpetuating his fellow apprentices, appreciation of his meritorious attributes. He was 23 years of age. His wife gave birth to a son a few weeks ago.

The Evening News, Thursday 6 April 1944

FREDERICK L KIDD – Pilot Officer 88029, 144 Squadron Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.
Born: 21 September 1917, Baptised at St George's Portsea.
Died: 6 June 1941, aged 24.
SAGE WAR CEMETERY

Frederick Lawrance Kidd was born in 1917. He was the son of Albert Victor and Ada Winifred Kidd, née Mitchell, of Bidbury Mead, Bedhampton, who were married in Portsmouth in 1916.

Pilot Officer Frederick Kidd is missing. He was educated at Portsmouth Grammar School and afterwards entered Lloyds Bank. He was a member of Havant Hockey Club. He joined the RAFVR at the outbreak of the war.

Hampshire Telegraph, 19 December 1941

Sage War Cemetery

Historical information

Sage was on the line of the Allied advance across northern Germany in 1945 but most of those buried at Sage War Cemetery were airmen lost in bombing raids over northern Europe, whose graves were brought in from cemeteries in the Frisian Islands and other parts of north-west Germany.

When war broke out in 1939 the Air Ministry employed the RAFVR as the principal means for aircrew entry to serve with the RAF. A civilian volunteer on being accepted for aircrew training took an oath of allegiance and was inducted in to the RAFVR. Normally he returned to his civilian job for several months until he was called up for aircrew training. By the end of 1941 more than half of Bomber Command aircrew were members of the RAFVR.

FLORENCE MAY LUFF – Civilian
Died: 10 October 1940, aged 38.
HAVANT CEMETERY

Killed in the garden of her home at 77 Hulbert Road by machine gun fire from an enemy aeroplane.

JOHN EDWARD COOK MERRIFIELD – Lance Sergeant 1435242, 215 Battery, 57 HAA Royal Artillery.
Died: 11 March 1941, aged 40.
WARBLINGTON CEMETERY, Section 3 Grave 758.

Born: 1901, Church Road, Portsmouth. Son of Joseph Marmaduke Merrifield, pawnbroker, and Mary Louise Merrifield, of Bedhampton; husband of Madge M. Merrifield, née Tier, of Emsworth. John Merrifield's address in the will index is Leecroft, Maylands Road, Bedhampton.

DIED ON DUTY

Well known in official circles in Portsmouth, where in peacetime he was on the staff of The Motor Taxation Office, Portsmouth, Sergt. John Edward Cook Merrifield (41) of Maylands Road, Bedhampton, was killed as a result of enemy action. The funeral took place at Warblington Cemetery on Saturday, when the coffin was draped with the Union Jack. The Army Chaplain attached to his unit officiated, and several officers, N.C.O.s and men from his company attended. The chief mourners were Mrs. Merrifield (widow) Miss Gwen Merrifield (sister), Mr H. Tier (father-in-law), and Mr. A. Tier. Representatives of the Motor Taxation Office, Masonic Lodges and the Emsworth Baptist Church were also present. There were many floral tributes.

Hampshire Telegraph, 21 March 1941

LESLIE PEARCE – Gunner, 80th Anti-Tank Regiment, Royal Artillery.
Died: 18 July 1943, aged 22.
KANCHANABURI WAR CEMETERY, Thailand. This is the largest of three cemeteries on the Burma-Siam railway.

Born Havant. Son of Christopher Thomas and Lilian Kate Pearce, née Day, of 31 Park Lane, Bedhampton, who were married at Havant in 1914.

PRISONER OF WAR

After being reported missing after the fall of Singapore, Fitter Gunner Leslie Pearce, the twenty two-years old son of Mr. and Mrs. C. Pearce of Park Lane, Bedhampton, is officially stated to be a prisoner of war. A former Havant Territorial, he was serving with an anti-tank battery in the Far East. He is an old Bedhampton schoolboy and peacetime employee of Messrs. Hartleys.

Hampshire Telegraph, 9 July 1943

Leslie died nine days after this article was published whilst a prisoner of the Japanese.

Kanchanaburi War Cemetery

Historical information

The Kanchanaburi War Cemetery (known locally as the Don-Rak War Cemetery) is the main prisoner of war (POW) cemetery for victims of Japanese imprisonment while building the Burma Railway. It is on the main

road, Saeng Chuto Road, through the town of Kanchanaburi, Thailand, adjacent to an older Chinese cemetery.

The cemetery was designed by Colin St Clair Oakes and is maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. There are 6,982 POWs buried there, mostly Australian, British, and Dutch. It contains the remains of prisoners buried beside the south section of the railway from Bangkok to Nieke, excepting those identified as Americans, whose remains were repatriated. There are 1,896 Dutch war graves, the rest being from Britain and the Commonwealth. Two graves contain the ashes of 300 men who were cremated. The Kanchanaburi Memorial gives the names of 11 from India who are buried in Muslim cemeteries.

Nearby, across a side road, is the Thailand-Burma Railway Centre about the railway and the prisoners who built it.

DAVID CHARLES PETERS – Gunner 5498331, 220 Battery, 85th AA Regt, Royal Artillery.
Died: 27 June 1940, aged 20.
HAVANT CEMETERY – Grave 1773.

Born: Havant. Son of Lieutenant Harold James Peters RN and Lillian Elizabeth Peters of Lester Avenue, Bedhampton. He was engaged to be married to Miss Sylvia Ridgwell.

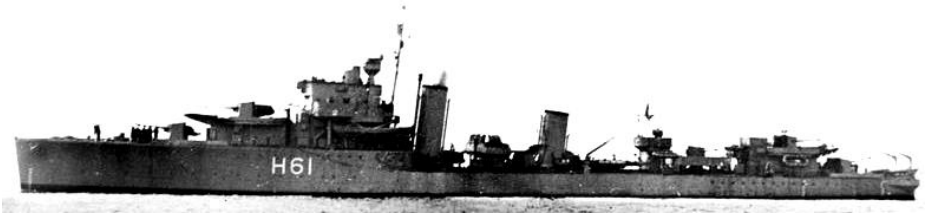
David Charles Peters, aged 20, has died in a hospital somewhere in England from severe head wounds received in Belgium over a month ago. He was driving the leading lorry of a convoy when he was hit by shrapnel, which passed through his skull and into his brain. During his time in hospital his mother scarcely left his side and was with him when he died. He was one of three brothers, all under the age of 22, who have been serving in the Army. The eldest, Bombardier Harold Peters, was wounded seriously in the shoulder while with the BEF in Rouen and is now home on leave. The youngest boy Eric (17) is a sapper in the Royal Engineers.

Hampshire Telegraph, 19 July 1940

JOHN ROBINSON – Ordnance Artificer 3rd Class, HMS *Express*.
Died: 2 September 1940, aged 33.
BEDHAMPTON, ST THOMAS' CHURCHYARD, east of church.

Son of George and Amy Robinson; husband of Cecilia Mary, née Burfitt - married in 1938 at Portsmouth.

Historical information



HMS *Express*

On 31 August 1940, HMS *Express* left Immingham, Lincolnshire, with five other destroyers to lay a minefield off the coast of the Netherlands. Three of the ships struck mines off Texel, causing a considerable loss of life. The *Express* lost four officers and fifty-five ratings when her bow was blown off. John Robinson died from his wounds the day after the explosion.

> *H.M.S. Express was an Eclipse-class destroyer, 1,375 tons; she has 4.7 inch guns, carried eight torpedo tubes and is also fitted as a minelayer. She is one of the vessels that escorted the King and Queen on their visit to France in 1938. Her Captain J. G. Bickford had been awarded the D.S.O for good services the previous month when the ship had assisted with the withdrawal from the Dunkirk beaches and the D.S.C. for action against enemy submarines the previous December. Following the encounter with enemy mines in September 1940, she suffered considerable loss of life; the ship was damaged but returned safely to port. The next of kin of all casualties had been informed.*
>
> *Portsmouth Evening News*, 6 September 1940

COLIN ROWLAND SHEPHERD – Trooper 14407466, 'A' Squadron 1st Lothians and Border Horse, Royal Armoured Corps.
Died: 27 February 1945, aged 20.
VENRAY WAR CEMETERY, Netherlands.

Born: 1924, Portsmouth. Son of Horace Rowland Shepherd and Gladys Irene Shepherd, née Hills. They were married in Portsmouth in 1919. In 1942 his father Horace died aged just 48.

Venray war cemetery

Historical information

The town of Venray fell to the Germans in May 1940 and was not re-entered by Allied forces until September 1944. It was liberated by Allied troops in October 1944 and the burials in the cemetery date from then until March 1945.

The 1st Lothians and Border Horse was part of the 51st Highland Division, which had been sent to reinforce the French Maginot Line and was there when the Germans started their offensive. South of Paris, they engaged the German Army south of the River Somme. Outnumbered, they fought a retreat to the fishing port of St. Valery-en-Caux, where some of the regiment were evacuated under heavy fire, the remainder had to surrender. Those evacuated re-formed the 1st Lothians and Border Horse, which was then attached to the 79th Armoured Division and returned to France. The regiment remained with 79th Armoured in North West Europe until the end of the war. Casualties, from their return to France, up to the end of the war, consisted of 17 men killed, 90 officers and other ranks wounded, and 16 officers and other ranks missing in action.

HAROLD GEORGE TURNER – Seaman LT/JX206526, Royal Naval Patrol Service, HM Anti-Submarine Trawler *Kingston Ceylonite*.
Died: 15 June 1942, aged 30.
Born: Chichester 1912. Son of Samuel David and Ethel Kate Turner, née Dridge; husband of Edith Turner, of Bedhampton.

CREEDS (OAK GROVE) CEMETERY, Virgin Beach, Virginia, USA.

Historical information

HM Trawler *Kingston Ceylonite* was lent to the United States Navy in 1942 to escort convoys off the coast of America. She was manned by a British crew but was under USN control.

On 15 June 1942 convoy KN-109 came into a minefield laid on 11 June by U-701 off Virginia Beach. HMS *Kingston Ceylonite* (FY 214) (A/Skipper Lt W.McK. Smith, RNR) sank and the tankers *Robert C. Tuttle* and *Esso Augusta***,** along with the destroyer USS *Bainbridge* (DD 246) were damaged.

The bodies of Harold Turner and two of his colleagues were washed ashore. A memorial to the *Bedfordshire* and *Kingston Ceylonite* is at Oak Grove cemetery.

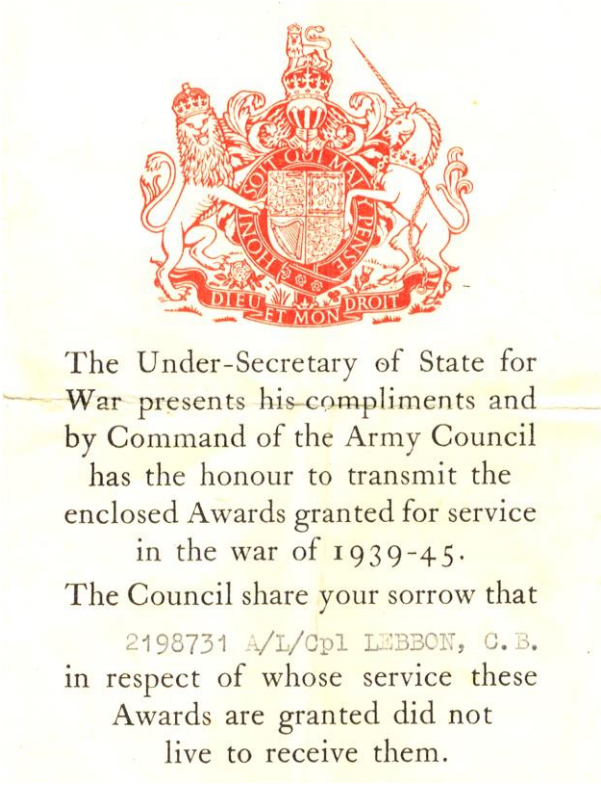
1939-45 War Medal

France and Germany Star

Atlantic Star

1939-45 Star

Some Second World War medals


DIEU ET MON DROIT
The Under-Secretary of State for War presents his compliments and by Command of the Army Council has the honour to transmit the enclosed Awards granted for service in the war of 1939-45.
The Council share your sorrow that
2198731 A/L/Cpl LEBBON, C.B.
in respect of whose service these Awards are granted did not live to receive them.

Medals awarded to those who lost their lives during the war were forwarded to their next of kin after the war ended.

Borough of Havant History Booklet No. 7

This booklet has been researched by
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8th June, 1946

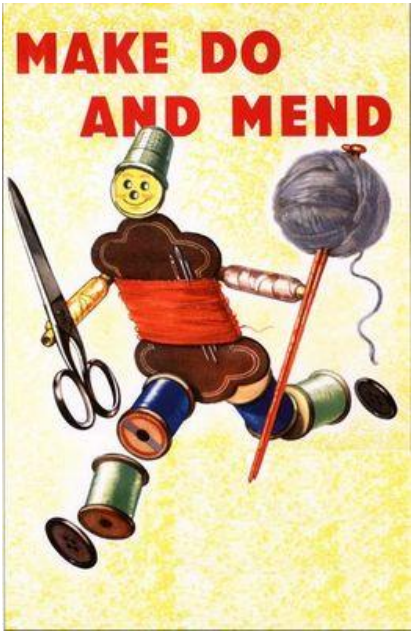
TO-DAY, AS WE CELEBRATE VICTORY,

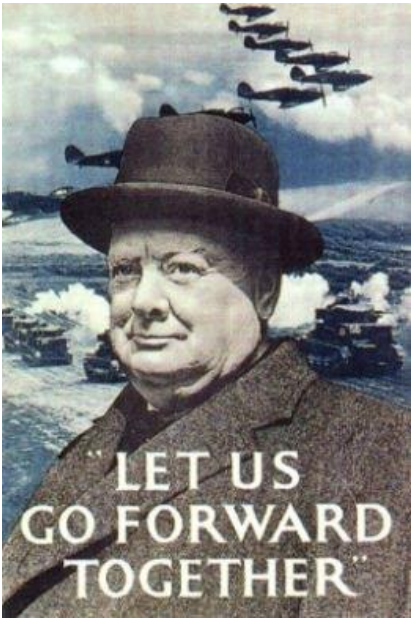
I send this personal message to you and all other boys and girls at school. For you have share in the hardships and dangers of a total war and you have shared no less in the triumph of allied nations.

I know you will always feel proud to belong to a country which was capable of such supreme effort; proud, too, of parents and elder brothers and sisters who by their courage, endurance and enterprise brought victory. May these qualities be yours as you grow up and join in the common effort to establish among the nations of the world unity and peace.

George R.I.

Message to school children from King George VI.





Some Second World War posters